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NATIONAL POLICY AND NAVAL STRENGTH

AND OTHER ESSAYS

By the same Author

SEA WARFARE

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NATIONAL POLICY AND NAVAL STRENGTH
AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY
VICE-ADMIRAL SIR H. W. RICHMOND
K.C.B.

WITH A FOREWORD BY
LORD SYDENHAM OF COMBE, G.C.S.I., F.R.S.

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FOREWORD

By Colonel Lord Sydenham of Combe,
G.C.S.I., etc., F.R.S.

Offa, King of Mercia, in the eighth century, 'after a glorious reign of nine years, bequeathed to England the useful lesson that he who will be secure on land must be supreme at sea.'[1] This 'lesson' can be traced back through the pages of history for more than 2000 years, where it takes the form of an immutable law never so strikingly affirmed as in the rise of the British Empire. It has at some periods been effectively applied to the salvation of our people; but there have been other times when it seemed to be forgotten, or when naval force was misused with inexorable national loss, happily in our case, never yet irretrievable.

If this is the unbroken teaching of history, and if in this country the truth is generally admitted, at least as a pious opinion, why have disastrous aberrations left their mark on the national life, and why have blighting heresies subverted national war policy?

These and many other important questions are closely analysed in Vice-Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond's admirable studies in which he seeks to build up a philosophy of 'British Warfare' based upon history—the only sure guide for the future.

[1] *Saxon Chronicles*, quoted by Campbell.

The treatment of naval war by historians has tended to promote misconceptions. While our general histories, usually permeated by bias of one kind or another, lay stress upon outstanding naval achievements, they ignore the measures which made them possible and the vital factors which combined to render them momentous. On the other hand, purely naval history traces naval operations with accurate detail, while leaving out of account the concurrent conditions, political and economic, even religious and dynastic, which may have deflected or favoured the employment of sea power.

In his interesting little book, recently published,[1] Captain Walter Elliot, M.P., gives one notorious example of the perversity of judgment thus engendered. Naval history presents us with lurid descriptions of outrages on our coasts left to the mercy of privateers and pirates—the 'useful lesson' of Offa being forgotten—when Charles I decided to levy ship money, then the right of the Crown. Political history, however, succeeded in making a hero patriot of John Hampden, a provincially-minded Buckinghamshire squire who, having 'organised a party,' won his case in a nescient House of Commons.

Thucydides in ancient days showed a remarkable gift for weaving naval and political history together to form a harmonious whole; but the local wars of his time, however important in shaping the fortunes of Europe, were trivial in the simplicity of the interacting forces compared with those of the eighteenth century and with the giant conflict of the twentieth.

In our day, Mahan stands out as a philosophic historian; but, as Sir Herbert Richmond notes, his

[1] *Toryism and the Twentieth Century.* (Philip Allan & Co.)

materials did not suffice to provide instruction sorely needed before 1914. This book fills up some gaping voids and lucidly explains how history must be studied and written if we are not to repeat the calamitous proceedings of which the root causes are now partly revealed. The glowing pages of Mr. Churchill's 'World Crisis' supply the latest warning of what the history of war should not be if it is to serve for the sound guidance of coming generations.

The Raleigh Lecture of 1923 on 'National Policy and Naval Strength' from the sixteenth to the twentieth century and the Essay on combined strategy, with which this volume begins, provide a broad foundation for all that follows. We are presented with a luminous survey, traced with a firm hand, of national war policy in operation through four hundred years. All the circumstances underwent drastic changes, and after the accession of William III, extensive military campaigns on the Continent began to crowd our histories as the rise of French ascendancy swayed the balance of sea power. It was 'an astounding piece of good fortune for this country [that] the policy of France was dictated by the military-minded Louvois instead of by Colbert, whose vision was of trade, ships, and colonies' (p. 17).

The diversion of French aims to military ambitions had far-reaching effects in shaping our national destiny. Throughout this long period, the correct or incorrect use of the British navy was a dominating factor, and the author shows that controversy in this regard persisted down to the present century.

In 1914 the Empire was forced to supreme efforts on sea and land. For a hundred years, during which naval material had been transformed beyond recognition,

we had no experience of naval warfare. The only war in which sea power played an evidently dominant rôle—that of 1904 between Russia and Japan—had been imperfectly studied. The Crimean War was shockingly mismanaged, as was the prolonged military campaign in South Africa.[1] From this and from our many small wars, no real guidance in national war policy could be derived, and tactical lessons were largely misleading. Failing the broad historical studies for which Sir Herbert Richmond earnestly pleads, it was inevitable that the Great War would illustrate the painful incertitude, vacillation and misdirection now partly disclosed. In the past, we had seemed at some periods to lose national inspiration, which could be regained only in the hard school of bitter experience. That process was repeated in 1914–18 with added rigours, because it had been falsely assumed that the revolution in technique rendered the teaching of centuries of war at sea necessarily obsolete, and that we must look to uninstructed genius to devise new methods and policies. We had learned complacently to repeat 'wretched catchwords' of which the practical implications were forgotten.

Taking as text 'Considerations of the War at Sea,' Sir Herbert Richmond deals with the use and misuse of naval force from August 1914 onwards, and ably reinforces his general thesis. The Entente Powers disposed of an immense numerical naval preponderance. Our fleet was—in certain respects—relatively and absolutely superior to its opponents as never before at the outset of war, and for the first time in our history we had, largely due to the exertions of the late Field-Marshal Sir H. Wilson, six divisions, the finest military force we ever

[1] *Cf.* the illuminating Elgin Report.

possessed, ready for any oversea service. How would these great initial advantages be translated into sea power? How were all the vast Imperial resources available to be brought to bear harmoniously upon the political objects—security and a just and lasting peace?

The immutable laws of sea warfare were quickly re-asserted; but old lessons had to be relearned at heavy cost, while new theories proved worse than illusory. Yet there was no situation presented to our puzzled and promiscuous War Councils that had not a close parallel in history. It was most fortunate that the Germans, with far more excuse, were equally lacking in the broad study of war. Their fleet, highly trained and technically efficient, but without naval traditions, was a new toy which the Kaiser and his Great General Staff were disinclined to risk. If it had been sent into the Channel at the critical moment when our forces were being transported to France, the great battle of the Marne might have been won, with the result of changing the whole aspect of the war. If again, in the nearly desperate situation which arose in 1918, when the greatest German military effort was in progress, it had been used to prevent the arrival of reinforcements in France and to damage the facilities for disembarkation, who can say what might not have happened? The risks were then far greater than in August 1914. The sacrifice might have been exceedingly heavy; but great risks were justified by the vital issue at stake. As in the Napoleonic wars, it was our good fortune that our enemies did not understand the 'tremendous weapon' of sea power.

Thus, as the author explains, the Germans determined 'to follow the lines of a *guerre de course*.'

'The German attack upon commerce, whether by

surface ships or submarines, brought out no new principle of naval war. On the contrary, it confirmed with the greatest precision the principles of commerce defence employed in the old wars. Although, in the earlier stages these principles were not followed, by the end of the war there were few to which we had not returned' (p. 93).

Our experience of the depredations of privateers and corsairs had been exhaustive. There was nothing so certain as that we should need small craft of all kinds on a large scale; but before war broke out, the theorists otherwise decided, and we had been bidden to admire the 'courageous stroke of the pen' by which numbers of ships at once urgently needed were thoughtlessly scrapped.

The vital importance of the sea-battle had been heavily discounted by the instructors who had convinced Mr. Churchill that 'our silent attack on the vital interests of the enemy' sufficed for our needs, that 'no obligations of war oblige us to go further,' and that there was 'no strategic cause' compelling us to fight off the coast of Jutland. It naturally followed that the only great naval action of the war was indecisive, leaving the situation at sea unaltered except that the counsels of von Tirpitz were reinforced, and the intensive U-boat war which followed was facilitated and rendered nearly successful. It was worth heavy sacrifice to smash the High Seas Fleet, which would have enabled us to enter the Baltic and perhaps to have averted the break-up of the huge Russian armies—the greatest war achievement of the Germans—while at the same time permitting the ports of egress of the U-boats to be sealed. All the teaching of the past pointed to the necessity for eliminat-

ing the bases of cruiser attacks on our commerce. Zeebrugge and Ostend admirably served the purpose of the new corsairs; but nothing was attempted until these ports had been strongly fortified by the Germans.

'Plans for blocking were suggested after the Germans had occupied the ports; but they were considered impracticable and were not carried out' (p. 106).

The brilliantly executed naval exploit at Zeebrugge came too late.

'The reply to the old privateers in the Channel lay in the convoy system and in the employment of a great flotilla numbering at one time no fewer than 1500 craft of all types used partly upon patrol, partly hunting in packs. A precisely similar set of measures was found necessary in this war' (p. 98).

But the Royal Commission of 1879 had pronounced convoy impracticable on evidence which I thought invalid, and the stern needs of the Great War caused it to be revived and systematised in July 1917. Even 'mystery ships,' used in the eighteenth century, had to be reinvented. This whole chapter of 'Considerations,' if sad reading, is eminently instructive.

Among outstanding pre-war aberrations was the 'Dreadnought policy,' condemned at the time by the best naval opinion and now admitted to have been a mistake. It would require a volume to trace back the germs of naval heresies, perhaps dating from misconceptions in regard to the Crimean War, which profoundly influenced the war at sea in 1914–18. In an illuminating essay on 'Battle Cruisers,' Sir Herbert Richmond discusses the employment of a type of warship which was a freak product of the neglect to study naval war. The

'foresight' which created the battle cruiser was duly acclaimed; but, as the author pertinently remarks:

'To start, as we did, the competition [in naval construction], is highly contrary to our interests. In the late war, the "foresight" which forced the pace has not benefited us; nor by any theory of war can it do so in the future' (p. 306).

It is impossible within the limits of a 'Foreword' to do justice to this thought-compelling volume, and I have attempted only to emphasise some lines of thought and of study which stand out from the wealth of pregnant reflections placed at our disposal.

In 'The Use of History' the author gives striking examples of the results of study applied or neglected, and he states that:

'It is idle to depend upon happy inspirations at the spur of the moment. The man who has the best chance of getting such happy inspirations is he whose mind is stored with previous experience' (p. 289). And the necessary study must be on the broadest lines, while 'if historical study be of value for those who have to think in terms of grand strategy, it is of no less value in major strategy—the major operations of fleets, or fleets and armies' (p. 286).

The appalling results of the lack of study, which are disclosed in Field-Marshal Sir W. Robertson's calm and well-documented narrative,[1] have left an ineffaceable mark upon our Empire. Helpless perplexity, decisions delayed too long and obtained by chance, warped policy and palpable errors, strew the tragic story of the Great War. We had a navy taught in one school and an army taught in another without any common foundation

[1] *Soldiers and Statesmen.* (Cassell & Co.)

securely based upon the national history. We had, at the Admiralty, no trained and organised War Staff, and at the War Office a General Staff growing in efficiency since its beginning in 1906 and broken up at the outset of war. We now have an Air Force separately educated on theories of its own.

To remedy these possibly disastrous conditions, an Imperial Defence College was established last year with Sir Herbert Richmond as its distinguished first Chief. He has provided his pupils with a first-class textbook exactly calculated to give inspiration to the individual studies, which, as he rightly maintains, can never be rendered superfluous by ordered instruction, however well designed. But such studies require to make at least a start at earlier ages than those for which Staff and War Colleges provide, and the Universities, which instruct our future rulers, should institute compulsory courses of lectures directed to bring political, naval and military history into harmony. This book contains the best possible material for the enlightenment of future Cabinet Ministers, who may thus be rendered immune from the nescience that entailed misdirection in the Great War, with ineffaceable consequences.

Sir Herbert Richmond would be the last to assert that the study of history can provide direct solutions for the strategic problems of the future into which aerial warfare will enter; but he rightly insists that without the intellectual discipline which history alone can supply, these problems will, as in 1914–18, be handled in haphazard fashion, with deplorable results.

We live in days when idealism in many forms is widely prevalent. 'Peace,' said Cromwell, 'is desirable for all men, if it can be had in conscience and honour,'

and this, the only true basis of peace, cannot always be counted upon whatever machinery the idealists may contrive. The Congress of Vienna gave peace to Europe for fifty years, broken only by one of the chronic Russo-Turkish wars. The exhibition of 1851 was expected to usher in universal peace, and the Crimean War, involving five European Powers, quickly followed. The Foreign Office, in the spring of 1870, saw no cloud on the horizon. Lord Haldane and Mr. Lloyd George were convinced in 1914 that the angel of peace was abroad. With such warnings before our eyes, and remembering the amateur settlement confusedly patched together at Versailles and needing readjustments of all kinds, it would be madness to neglect the studies, the need of which Sir Herbert Richmond has admirably explained.

More than ever, in view of the swift sequence of events in these days, do we require a considered philosophy of ' British Warfare,' in which the ' major strategy ' of the sea, the land and the air is welded into a national policy of Imperial Defence. It is reassuring to know that this will be the aim of the new College under the wise guidance of Sir Herbert Richmond.

SYDENHAM OF COMBE.

January 1928.

PREFACE

With a few exceptions the papers which appear in this volume have been delivered as addresses at Cambridge, at London University, and at the Royal United Service Institution. One, 'Some Influences of Sea-Power in the War with Germany,' was published in the first volume of the 'History of the Peace Conference,' and is reprinted by permission of the Council of the Royal Institute of International Affairs; for which courtesy I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Council of that body.

H. W. R.

January 1928.

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NATIONAL POLICY AND NAVAL STRENGTH

Sixteenth to Twentieth Century [1]

We are all familiar with the idea that naval strength is essential to the security of this Kingdom of ours, and for the support of its external policy. To this there is a corollary which is, perhaps, less familiar; that external policy itself aims at the maintenance of our naval strength. Indeed, we may go even further, and say that the attitude taken up by this country in many of the great international situations and movements has been determined finally by the effect one or another course of action would have upon our strength at sea.

Strength at sea is a compound of many elements, of which ships of war spring first to the mind: and ships must have seamen, they must have harbours, they need supplies. But a navy has also frontiers. Just as a continental nation strives to achieve secure and strong frontiers—a range of mountains, a river, a buffer state, or a desert—so a maritime nation directs its attention to a corresponding problem. Its interests

[1] The Raleigh Lecture on History, February 21, 1923.

are in the sea highway; and any territory from which those interests can be reached constitutes a frontier. Therefore, so far as is practicable, the maritime nation is anxious that the territory on the other side of a highway, or in the neighbourhood of it, belongs rather to a friend, or an innocuous power, than to a prospective enemy or one that has the capacity to act at sea. Ships or seamen may indeed be increased by the internal efforts of a country; but frontiers are international questions with which external policy has to deal. So too alliances and questions of rights at sea are matters external, very essential to sea-power and therefore objects to which the efforts of Policy are directed.

Many threads run through that great fabric, the National Policy of England of the last three centuries, and none will take so narrow a view as to say that any single thread has dominated it throughout all those years. Particular and immediate causes of widely differing characters—dynastic, religious, or social—spring at different times into the front of the stage, and furnish the immediate object of the statesman's care. But while these come and go, one basis of Policy is so persistently recurrent that it seems to deserve a claim to permanency: the maintenance of naval strength.

I do not pretend to make a survey of Policy in all its transitions, for that has already been done, but only to make some slight examination of the degree to which that part of it relating to the maintenance of strength at sea—by which I mean the combination of all its elements, commercial and fighting strength—has actually dictated or influenced its course. How often during the course of the centuries has not the conclusive test to which to subject a matter of policy been in the

question, 'How does this proposal affect our maritime strength?'

The Raleigh Lecture seeks to keep alive the memory of Raleigh, the times in which he lived, the influences of the thoughts and actions of the spacious Elizabethan period. It will therefore be fit and proper to begin with Raleigh's thoughts in this matter, and to trace in some broad measure their application down the long path of later experience.

What is called 'the doctrine of sea-power' did not, as we well know, take its origin from the Elizabethans. In the 'Libel of English Policy,' of which the Bishop of Chichester is supposed to have been the writer in the fifteenth century, he says that the true process of English Policy was to 'cherish merchandise, keep the Admiralty, that we be masters of the Narrow Sea.' For the Elizabethans this had a new meaning. No longer was it merely the Narrow Sea that interested them, no, not even the more spacious waters of the Mediterranean. English trade, which until Henry VII's time had been confined to parts of Europe and Iceland, had now stretched across the Atlantic and was seeking an outlet in America. The Sea had become the Ocean. The instrument of trade, the ship, had increased her power of endurance, and the true meaning of trade and maritime command had become clear to British thinkers. As Professor Pollard told us last year, the true expansion of England at this time was not territorial but an expansion of the mind; and of those who contributed to this expansion not the least was Raleigh.

It is not Raleigh, the Sea Commander, but Raleigh, the Thinker, who plays a great part in this development of the idea that our policy must depend upon power

to execute it, and, as our power was derived from the sea, so our policy should always contribute towards the increase in the strength of its instrument. In more than one of his Essays Raleigh discusses problems of foreign relationships, and the action he considers England should take in reference to alliances or interferences in war between other states. When he sets himself this task he goes direct to the fundamental point, and puts himself the question, 'What is most to the interest of this country?'

What is England's interest? Security. In what manner can her security be lost? 'There are,' he says, 'two ways in which England may be afflicted. The one by invasion, being put to the defensive in which we shall cast lots for our own garments. The other by impeachment of our Trades by which Trades all Commonwealths flourish and are enriched.' We are, in fact, comparable to a fortress which can be subjected only by assault or investment, and it is by sea alone that we can be made to suffer these afflictions. 'Invaded or impeached we cannot be except by sea.' Commerce, he points out, is essential to us, for it is the strength of nations, for money, the first and most forcible of the five means by which power is attained, is derived from commerce. Commerce requires great quantities of shipping and fighting, and these represent our strength. Therefore he concludes that in our foreign relations that country which is strongest in shipping 'is most to be suspected and feared.'

Such a country was Holland, or, to be more correct, the United Provinces. Her long wars with Spain, and her diligent search all over the world for trade, had given her 'the most orderly and best disciplined men

of war by sea in all Europe, and she can furnish more men of war and mariners than all England and Scotland can do, and with greater facility and in shorter time.' She is so placed that she threatens our Baltic trade, the loss of which would cause great distress. What, then, should be our attitude towards the struggle then proceeding between Spain and this formidable maritime rival of ours? While there is no question of joining Spain against her, should we remain neutral or should we assist her? What is the *final* test to which our Foreign Policy should answer in this situation? Are we, in the name of Freedom, to support a small nation struggling bravely for liberty? Or are we to give help to the Protestant cause? Shall we seek some advantage for the Dynasty? Or shall we take some action that will increase our territory?

Not one of these does Raleigh bring into the question. None is a national interest. The sole national interest with which we should concern ourselves is our maritime strength. That policy which will best defend our power at sea from being weakened, or, better still, increase it, is the true policy for this Kingdom. The Dutch are powerful at sea, but if left to fight Spain single-handed will be overcome on land; and, he asks, what will then be the effect upon ourselves? Beaten, or in danger of being beaten, the Dutch have two roads open to them—to accept defeat and become once more a province of Spain, or to turn to France for help and join her. If they return into the Spanish fold, then we shall have a maritime combination of a most dangerous character against us, a navy in the East acting in co-operation with a navy and army in the West. Such a division would be enforced upon

our fleet to guard us in both areas that we could be strong enough in neither, and we should be exposed to the dangers of the loss of our commerce from Dutch action, and of invasion from Spain.

If, on the other hand, the Dutch go to France, they furnish France with what she chiefly needs against us —shipping. We then lose the maritime advantage we had over France. 'I hope,' he says, 'I shall never live to see the day when the French shall be masters of the Netherlands upon any conditions'—a statement that, possibly, foreshadows the policy concerning the Low Countries that first came to the forefront as a question of diplomacy about fifty years later. For these reasons, based solely upon the maintenance of security at sea, upon questions of maritime strength, Raleigh recommends interfering in the struggle to support the Dutch against Spain. Holland must neither be reabsorbed into Spain nor absorbed into France. Our situation at sea would be more seriously prejudiced by either of these than by her remaining a solitary rival. Added to France or Spain, she became far more dangerous.

The same idea enters into Raleigh's often-quoted discourse on a marriage between Prince Henry and a daughter of Savoy. To his mind an alliance with Savoy will neither strengthen nor enrich England. Savoy cannot help us against France, Spain, the Pope, or the Emperor, for she is not a maritime state, nor has she any harbour except the poor galley port of Villafranca, and so cannot help us at sea. She is also remote, and elsewhere he expresses the view that 'Every league made with a Prince or republic remote is weak, and rather aideth us with fame than effect, and consequently deceiveth all those that in such amity repose confidence.'

Raleigh did not, nor could he, foresee that a hundred years later we should enter the then remote Mediterranean, and that good relations with the House of Savoy would influence our power of acting in those waters. To him there were no advantages in an alliance with that House beyond what he contemptuously dismisses as those resulting from the possession of a sum of money and a beautiful lady. On the other hand he sees a serious disadvantage, and that disadvantage relates to maritime power. Such an alliance would create differences with the Netherlands; it promised to throw them into the arms of France or Spain, and 'he that hath them (the Netherlands) shall give the law to the rest—they master us both in their number (of ships) and in their mariners.' Thus, to the touchstone of strength at sea he applied this question as he had the other. Doubt may properly be thrown on his views as to the probable action of the Dutch in the cases discussed, but it is not in his judgment on that matter that the principal interest, so far as my subject of to-day is concerned, lies, but in the fundamental test to which he appeals for the guidance in our conduct.

Fear that France would become a maritime state, and consideration of our policy if there were prospects of her doing so, either by joining with the Dutch or by her own endeavours, is expressed by Raleigh's contemporary, Monson. He even goes so far as to recommend that very dubious course of action, a preventive war. 'Rather than the French ambitious thoughts,' he wrote, 'should now aspire to greatness in shipping, it were better, happier, and safer for us to proclaim an everlasting war against them than by our suffering peace they should attain to a strength at sea, but we will not oppose

the French greatness among themselves *when it shall have no relation to us* abroad.' Let them, in fact, become as powerful as they desired on land. That was no concern of ours. But if their ambitions were leading them out into blue water, then it became a different matter. We should fight them rather than allow them to rival our strength at sea.

Neither Raleigh nor Monson was a statesman holding a responsible position in foreign affairs, though each was placed high enough to be consulted and to express his views. I do not quote them in approval of the principle of preventive war, or even as definite expressions of the policy actually followed: but they show the working of the minds of contemporary men, and show how clearly the need for maritime strength was recognised as being not merely a question of shipbuilding but also one of our foreign relations.

The policy of the period of the early years of the seventeenth century is marked by a reluctance to take part in the disputes on the Continent. Although Protestantism was again attacked in the second Spanish-Dutch war of 1621, and was being attacked also in France, still an even stronger interest contributed to keep England out of the disputes. She had now become, as Seeley says, a true maritime state, building on the foundations—for foundations only they were—laid by the Tudors. She was colonising. Colonisation is an expression of trade—we see colonies and trade associated in the same Board of 'Trade and Plantations'—and the quarrels of the Continent, the religious and dynastic problems there, affected England's national interest far less than those of oceanic development. Holland was now strong enough to stand by herself.

Spain, though still feared by some, was recognised as no serious enemy. England, now capable of protecting herself, secure in her territory and religion, was under no necessity to intervene elsewhere. She did indeed, after a hesitation that expresses in some degree her lack of interest in the matter, enter into a war with Spain over the Palatinate, but such popularity as supported this war was dictated at least as much by the benefits to trade that were expected to follow, as from any passion for supporting the Reformed Religion. So, throughout this period our continental policy has an air of uncertainty. When we fight France or Spain we do it in a passionless, and perhaps nerveless, manner. No well-defined national object actuates our conduct, and, where the object is not clear, conduct will always be feeble. The people—or the merchants—were willing to fight Spain for the increase of prosperity through trade that was expected, and the King was prepared to intervene in Germany, or to support the Protestant or Huguenot causes ; but for the lack of an outstanding expression of the nation's interests an unnecessary war is begun, and conducted in a fruitless manner. Our hearts were elsewhere, in developing trade and colonies : it was there our true interests lay. Even the need for maintaining naval strength became dim, notwithstanding the writings—and there are many—of those like Colonel Harwood who tried to keep it to the forefront.

The rise of France under Richelieu coincided with the internal troubles of England between King and Parliament. What Monson had feared was then taking place without a corresponding reaction on our part. France, under that great Minister whose appreciation of the value of the sea was so true that he could say,

'without the sea one can neither profit from peace nor sustain war,' was gathering strength by unity, overthrowing Spain, and becoming a sea Power, without apparently inducing on our part those fears and counter-preparations that have accompanied the rise of other sea Powers. The confused internal condition of the country may account in part for this, but there was another cause which attracted the attention of the people notwithstanding the constitutional disputes—the great increase in the maritime power of the Dutch, then emerging victoriously from their second long struggle with Spain. The growth of Dutch trade, and the belief that the Dutch aimed at a monarchy of the sea, gave rise both to anxiety and distrust. The maritime interests of England, her greatest interests, were believed to be in danger. The Navigation Act of 1651 was a consequence; a measure which, by forbidding the carriage of British goods in ships other than British, aimed at protecting our shipping interests and also strengthening us at sea by increasing the number of our seamen. Affecting, as they did, the interests of neutrals, these were not municipal Acts; they possessed an international character and constituted a definite step in foreign policy. The view that they were designed to bring about war and afford occasion for crushing at one blow the sea-power of the Dutch, in its twin and interdependent manifestations of trade and fighting ships, is now discredited—though the opinion that this would have been a sagacious policy is supported by no less a person than Adam Smith. 'National animosity,' he wrote, 'at that particular time aimed at the very same object which the most deliberate wisdom could have recommended, the diminution of the naval power of

Holland, the only naval power which could endanger the security of England.'

The Acts remained on the Statute Book for nearly 200 years. They are a standing example of recognition of the statesmen of that period that the true interest of the Kingdom lay in its maritime strength and of the duty of Policy to foster that strength. I am not discussing whether or not the Acts did actually achieve what they were believed to do, but the doctrine which dictated their adoption. The Acts were believed to stimulate our real, our most important, interests—navigation and naval power, the twin props of our well-being. 'As a means of raising seamen,' said Lord Sheffield, 'it cannot too often be repeated that it is not possible to be too jealous on the head of Navigation.' They were bound up with the problem of colonial trade; indeed, it appears that the very value of the sugar trade of the West Indies related not only to the direct contributions it brought to the Exchequer, but also to the great increase in shipping and seamen the expansion of the trade would bring into being, so that the West Indian merchants could say that 'navigation and naval power are not the parents of commerce but its happy fruits.' Chalmers, speaking of the National Policy of which the Acts were the concrete expression, remarks, 'In these considerations of nautical force and public safety we discover the fundamental principle of Acts of Navigation, which, though established in opposition to domestic and foreign clamours, have produced so great an augmentation of our native shipping and sailors, and which therefore should not be sacrificed to any projects of private gain.'

To return to Cromwell and the times of the initiation

of the Acts. The Protector and his colleagues were well aware that the Acts would raise 'foreign clamour'; but the measure was considered necessary for the upholding of our maritime strength, and whatever dangers or resentments to which it might expose us, these were accepted in view of the necessity for preserving maritime power.

So the cry went out that, as Spain had been the old enemy who had designed to obtain the universal monarchy of Christendom, now the Dutch were scheming to lay a foundation for themselves for engrossing the universal trade. 'It is by trade and the due ordering and governing of it, and by no other means,' says one of the many pamphleteers of the time, in August 1651, 'that wealth and shipping can be either increased or upheld; and consequently by no other that the power of any nation can be sustained by land, or by sea.'

A dual significance was now being widely attached to trade. Trade itself being the means by which power is sustained in war, a nation whose greatness was due to trade was thereby vulnerable. Spanish power, it had long been recognised, was founded upon the wealth drawn from trade, and so a new form of war had come into being, a form that does not exist in the fifteenth century. War is a process of compelling compliance upon one's enemy. The pamphleteers of 1651 wrote that, 'It is by knowledge of trade and commerce, and the course of it, that one nation or state knows how to straiten and pinch another, and to compel compliance from them,' either by stopping necessary imports, obstructing exports, or weakening shipping. There is a singular ring of modern science in this sentence,

enforcing the need of knowledge of the trade and commerce of an enemy, which we who have had recent experience of the war at sea will detect. Out of this arose recognition of the importance to a maritime state of preserving the power to stop enemy trade at sea, together with all its concomitant measures, such as examination of all ships to ascertain whether they were enemy or carried enemy commerce. Hence arose our doctrine of war, that no matter by whom carried, goods for an enemy or belonging to an enemy could legitimately be taken.

These were those fundamental 'Maritime Rights,' shorn of which the naval weapon would become offenceless, unable to use its most effective means for 'compelling compliance.' To uphold these Rights, without which our naval strength, shield and protection though it might be, was no sword, became a corner-stone of National Policy. We therefore find those of our Governments which had experience of war invariably adamant in insisting upon exercising these essential Rights, firmly refusing even to listen to proposals for their modification, even though war should be the result; for war was preferable to a diminution of our power at sea. It is indeed noticeable that we continuously exercised these Rights against the Dutch, to the detriment of the Dutch, even when they were our allies. Identical, too, as were the interests of England and the United Provinces, as Protestant Powers, in opposing the Counter-Reformation, and allied as the two nations were at later periods against the encroachments of France or Spain, British Ministries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries never abrogated in the smallest degree their rights in this matter; so

important was it, in their eyes, to maintain the power to use to the full its naval strength. They stopped and searched Dutch ships as freely as any others. The claim to this right was a predominant cause of the actual war with the Provinces in 1652; it strained severely our relations with them in 1656; we upheld it in 1657, when the Spaniards wished to use Dutch ships to carry their goods; we maintained it against the Dutch in the Seven Years War, when the addition of their navy to the French would have been a serious matter; we insisted upon it in 1780, even when we were in conflict with a great European coalition and with the revolted North American Colonies. Only under the pressure of force at the second Armed Neutrality did we make some insignificant concessions. The maintenance of these rights was considered of such importance in 1812, that, although we were engaged in our titanic struggle with Napoleon, we considered the disadvantages of having the United States added to our enemies less than those that would follow from a modification of our code. In the peace negotiations at the end of the Napoleonic Wars it was clearly laid down that no proposals mitigating our Maritime Rights could possibly be entertained. Lord Aberdeen cautioned M. de St. Aiquan 'against supposing that any possible consideration could ever induce Great Britain to abandon a particle of what she felt to belong to her maritime code, from which in no case could she ever recede'; nor would she even discuss the question of the 'Freedom of the Seas.'

Maritime Rights, then, were an essential part of a national policy, based on the principle that an enemy could, in the words of the seventeenth-century writer,

'be compelled to compliance' by interruption of her import and export trade. But was it true? Had not the Habsburg Empire of the Tudor period been dependent on the Indies, so that Francis I had cried out that the Emperor could carry on a war against him by means of the riches he drew from the West Indies alone? and had not the Elizabethan seamen had a fair field of action, and strength at sea withal wherewith to press the enemy? They had. But the power had never been exercised to its full. The measures taken had been partial. The sword had not been used to cut home. Spain had been drained and weakened, but the artery that carried her life-blood had never been severed. The Commonwealth seamen, however, used no half measures, and the truth of the English doctrine was proved by Blake in 1657, when he fought his way into Santa Cruz and prevented the treasure on board the Plate Fleet from reaching Spain. With the story of our great soldier-seaman's successful fight with the ships of the Plate Fleet all are familiar. But the student of policy looks for the results. These were indeed far-reaching. They were not confined to the waters of Teneriffe. Thus, the Spanish conquest of Portugal, until then proceeding favourably, was brought to a stop for want of money to pay the armies; in Flanders the Spanish armies were weakened for the same reason; while both in Spain and America prices rose. Cargoes of needed goods could not be sent to the Spanish Colonies, to the great distress of the people there. The treasure that should have paid the armies lay in the hills of Teneriffe, the ships that should have carried the goods were destroyed.

How well it was commonly understood that Spain

should be struck through her wealth is shown in its lyrical expression by Marvell :

> Oh ! would those treasures which both Indies have
> Were buried in as large and deep a grave.
> War's chief support with them would buried be,
> And the land owe her peace unto the sea.
> Ages to come your conquering arms will bless,
> There they destroy what has destroyed their peace,
> And in one war the present age may boast
> The certain seeds of many wars are lost.

When Spain, having lost her own ships, would have sent the bullion in Dutch ships, Cromwell stood firm to the right of search. Thus the policy which had maintained Maritime Rights proved itself, and the treasure remained as useless to Spain as were the guineas that Robinson Crusoe found on the wreck to him. Without these Rights naval strength would have been shorn of its power ; the victories at sea would have been fruitless, and the battles have deserved, in some degree, the censure of ' sterile ' which Jomini applies to battles fought merely for the sake of winning them. From that reproach our national policy kept us free.

The Restoration brought with it two wars with the Dutch ; these were the expression of a policy partly dynastic, partly commercial. Neither of these can be called an employment of policy to increase naval strength. Rather are they the employment of a naval strength that is not felt to be in any need of political aid. The growing strength of France, unnoticed by Cromwell, was still unnoticed by Charles and his ministers ; and the two sea Powers whose interests, even as trading nations, were so identical, indulged in a fratricidal struggle to the real advantage of neither and to the disadvantage of both. It is hard to believe that if the

principal aim of policy had been the maintenance of naval strength we should have proceeded to destroy a peaceful maritime commercial state and allowed an ambitious state to grow into being. The error was indeed discovered in 1672, and the result was the Treaty of Westminster of 1674. By an astounding piece of good fortune for this country the policy of France was dictated by the military-minded Louvois instead of by Colbert, whose vision was of trade, ships, and colonies. The continental wars that resulted from this ill-chosen military policy, enforced upon France so vast an expenditure upon her armies that money was not available for her fleet. Britain was thereby afforded the opportunity to regain the supremacy at sea she had temporarily lost, and her statesmen were not slow to see that her foreign policy could be made an instrument for the maintenance of her sea-power.

The rise of the power of France brought acutely to the front the question of the policy this country should observe concerning the Netherlands, the importance of which Raleigh had fully appreciated.

The period of William III and Anne brought with it wars in resistance to French ascendancy territorially in Europe and commercially in her navy, her shipping, and her colonies; and those wars hinged largely upon the Netherlands. But why was such importance attached to the Netherlands? One reason was the need of supporting the Dutch, now recognised as our national allies, without whom we could not withstand the naval power of France: but still more there was the danger that would result from the possession of the Low Countries by an ambitious hostile and powerful state. Precisely as the thinkers of the late sixteenth and early

seventeenth centuries had seen danger in a French absorption of Holland, because of the increase in her maritime power such an absorption would bring about, so thought those of the end of the seventeenth century. France, in possession of the harbours and facilities offered by the Netherlands, could only be prevented from overpowering us by vast increases in our strength at sea, and whether we could make those increases, whether the burden were not more than we could bear, was open to question. Strength is a purely relative term; there are two ways by which it may be attained —namely, either by increasing one's own force or preventing the enemy from increasing his. The policy of opposing the French in the Netherlands was of the latter order: it was one of preventing her from obtaining the maritime benefits and increases of shipping that would result from the possession of the Scheldt and Antwerp, and the great military advantage of a naval base opposite our heart. The object of the policy was the maintenance of maritime power; and how important were the Netherlands is shown by our giving up a colonial conquest—Cape Breton—in a war largely of a colonial character, in order to recover them from the French.

Of this same order was one aspect of the British interpretation of the doctrine of the Balance of Power in the eighteenth century. The Balance of Power was a means by which to maintain this country's naval strength. It was not a measure for preventing war; it was not one for dividing into two equal camps the forces of the various Powers; nor had it an altruistic aim such as supporting the weak against the strong. It aimed at obliging our continental rivals to maintain

such large land forces that they could not at the same time afford to maintain a navy that threatened our strength. No country can afford for long great armaments in all elements. So long as the Habsburgs and the Princes of the Empire held together and were able to support large armies, so long France must do the same, and so long as she had to do so could not find the money to outbuild Britain at sea. The Duke of Newcastle put the matter in a few words when he said, 'France will outdo us at sea when they have nothing to fear by land. I have always maintained that our marine should protect our alliances upon the continent; and they, by diverting the expense of France, enable us to maintain our superiority at sea.' This expresses the doctrine in a nutshell.

The Netherlands question again sprang into prominence in the early days of the French Revolution. The Jacobin invasion of the Low Countries in 1792 was a principal cause of the rupture with this country. Other causes, truly, there may have been that might eventually have brought us to war with Revolutionary France; but what was fundamental was the old question of the Netherlands and the Scheldt, and for exactly the same reasons as it had been fundamental a hundred years earlier; fundamental, indeed, from the days of Edward III. It was vital to British sea-power that a military and naval rival should not be able to obtain that immense additional strength that is represented by possession of such a base of operations as the Scheldt close to its heart, forcing us to divide and weaken our fleet, or incur great expenses in increasing it—and that possibly fruitlessly since the enemy also could increase his—in order to guard the country against invasion,

and the trade, in one of its most important points, against impeachment. Because our naval strength was threatened by the Scheldt Decrees in November 1792 war between Britain and Revolutionary France became inevitable. At the peace, the absolute exclusion of France from any naval establishment on the Scheldt was made an essential condition.

I speak of naval strength being threatened because bases of operation are essential factors in the power to use our great weapon. We had learned that however great our navy we could not use its strength permanently in any theatre unless it possessed harbours. Hence our acquisition of Gibraltar and Minorca; and hence, too, our analogous attitude towards the possession of bases by a foreign rival. Just as our policy had been to keep France out of the Scheldt, so our policy had also been to keep her out of Dunkirk, as the Dunkirk clauses of the Treaty of Utrecht show. Abroad it was the same. Sicily, holding a commanding position in the Mediterranean, was an island of high importance for naval reasons when Britain became a Mediterranean Power. Until Britain entered the Mediterranean and had strategic interests there, Sicily occupied no great place in British eyes. Thus in the proposed Partition Treaty of 1698 and 1699 it was to fall, by consent of William III, to France, a rival sea Power: but when our possession of Gibraltar and Minorca extended our power of effective action in the Mediterranean, Sicily assumed an interest to us. The Treaty of Utrecht allocated Sicily to the non-naval Savoy; and when, in 1718, Spain, suddenly breaking out, seized Sicily, a British squadron was sent without delay to co-operate with Savoy and Austria in her expulsion. Nor did we offer

any opposition, at the end of this short war, to the transfer of Sicily from the King of Sardinia to the Emperor. By so doing we met the wishes of the Emperor, and thus strengthened the bonds upon which the Balance of Power depended: it made no difference to us in a maritime sense whether Sicily were in the hands of one or another of the non-naval Powers: it made a great difference if it were in the hands of a naval one.

The justness of the views as to the naval importance of Sicily was confirmed by the practical experiences of the Napoleonic Wars. British statesmen saw with perfect clearness what it would mean if Sicily should fall into the hands of Napoleon in 1803. If Sicily were lost, 'it would become doubtful,' wrote Harrington to Nelson, 'whether the blockade of Toulon could be maintained as effectively as it has been hitherto': and it would make matters critical in the Adriatic and Greece. So, as it had been a matter of foreign policy to prevent the island from falling into the hands of a Power possessing naval strength, its continued occupation by a non-naval Power became a point in our war policy, or what we may call our grand strategy: and it is not without interest to recall that the movement of the troops sent out to assist to hold Sicily against the French culminated in Trafalgar.

While the principle of maintaining sea-power may be fairly obvious in the problem of alliances with Holland, of occupation of the Low Countries, and of the Balance of Power, its connexion with the Near Eastern question is possibly less apparent. For what reason was the maintenance of the Turkish Empire so consistently, and for so long, regarded as a British interest? I think

I do not exaggerate when I say that it was because our maritime interests were believed to be bound up in the preservation of Turkey. Turkey was a feeble power at sea, but she occupied a situation of great stategic importance at the Dardanelles, flanking our trade route in the Mediterranean, a route important long before the Suez Canal increased its value. Within the Black Sea there lay a Power, Russia, the possessor of a navy to which importance was attached: at least, a navy that we could not afford wholly to neglect, particularly if it should be joined to the navy of any Mediterranean Power. Such a force, acting from a secure base in the Dardanelles, would unquestionably affect our maritime position in the Mediterranean. But so long as the Turkish Empire stood, and Constantinople and the Dardanelles remained in her hands, the Russian navy could not act either singly or in alliance with another fleet in the Mediterranean, nor, so long as friendship with Turkey existed, would the Straits be a base for any other hostile navy. In the view of the statesmen of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it was a greater advantage to Britain that the Russian fleet should be prevented from coming out of the Black Sea than that the British fleet should be able to go in. Pitt took this view; the Duke of Wellington held it. To each of them the closing of the Dardanelles was the end to which we should direct our political efforts. Lord Salisbury, though he drew different conclusions from his predecessors, arrived at it from the same initial premiss—the relation of the whole problem to maritime power. 'I feel convinced,' he writes to Lord Lytton in March 1877, 'that the old policy—wise enough in its time—of defending English interests by sustaining the Ottoman

dynasty, has become impracticable.' Some territorial rearrangement appeared preferable. We should take steps to provide ourselves with a base in the Eastern Mediterranean while we could, before France had recovered her position or Germany became a naval Power. He did not share the fear of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean for the Russians were not a maritime people. 'Their naval history simply does not exist. . . . Maritime population they have practically none. And yet we are asked to believe that their presence in the Black Sea or the Bosporus would be a serious menace to England in the Mediterranean. . . . To make a maritime Power something more is wanted than a good port. Men and money are required; and Russia has got neither.' Because we were much the strongest naval Power we could with perfect safety see the Russians permitted to come into the Mediterranean. The grounds assigned to opposing Russia, upon which so much of our Near Eastern policy hinged, 'appear to me,' he said, 'wholly untenable.' Fundamentally, it will be seen, our attitude towards the Eastern and Low Country questions rested upon the same solid grounds of maritime interests—navigation and naval strength.

With the dawn of the twentieth century a new sea Power sprang into being. Although we are still too close to the events of the last fifteen or twenty years to be able to see things in their true perspective, it is clear that the feeling of security we had hitherto enjoyed gave way to another. We no longer felt as we and as our eighteenth-century opponents of continental alliances had felt, that we 'do not stand in need of assistance from any Power on the Continent.' Lord Haldane remarks, in his 'Before the War': 'The days

when splendid isolation was possible were gone. Our sea-power, even as an instrument of self-defence, was in danger of becoming inadequate in the absence of friendships which should ensure that other navies would remain neutral, if they did not actively co-operate with ours. . . . It was only through the medium of such friendships that ultimate naval preponderance could be secured. . . . Had there been no initial reason for the Entente policy in the desire to get rid of friction with these two great nations (France and Russia), the preservation of the prospect of continuing able to command the sea in war would in itself have necessitated the Entente.' [1]

What I have called the 'Municipal effort' of providing money had, indeed, become so great that it appeared beyond our strength, more especially as money was being required for many other purposes. The sums considered available would not suffice to maintain our maritime strength, so, just as our predecessors had had to fall back upon other means, we had to do the same. The means consisted in forming friendships. What was happening was a precise reproduction of what has happened before. Anxious as many were to avoid the entanglements of continental affairs, the sheer logic of events was proving too strong for us, and we had to abandon the isolation we both desired and enjoyed, and to fall back upon the same expedients as those who have gone before.

Thus, through different periods we can trace at least one definite aim running with slight, very slight, interruption through our external policy—that by its efforts it shall contribute to supplement the internal

[1] Lord Haldane, *Before the War*, pp. 7–8.

efforts to maintain supremacy at sea. At one time we see our statesmen concluding alliances with an eventual aim of diverting a prospective rival's money from his navy to his army; at another to procure active naval assistance, when the resources of the rivals appear capable of outstripping us alone: our alliances aim also, at other times, at preventing the principal hostile state from seizing territory of naval importance—the Low Countries, Dunkirk, Sicily, the Dardanelles; and we view the occupation of such commanding points unfavourably or favourably according to whether it will not weaken our security at sea, either by decreasing the power of our fleet, increasing its burdens, or increasing the maritime strength—either directly or indirectly—of a Power that has the capacity to injure us; that is to say, we esteem such territory in terms of its influence upon our strength at sea. We engage in alliances, alliances which almost invariably involve us in quarrels over petty principalities, duchies, bishoprics, or minor monarchies with which we have no direct interest or concern, not because we are interested in the personality, the dynasty, or the religion of the ruler, not even because we like or dislike either party to the quarrel, but because disputes between these lesser Powers provide too often the spark that lights a great war, in the outcome of which our security at sea will eventually be involved.

This may seem a cold and selfish doctrine, at variance with the higher aspirations that should dictate policy, comparing ignobly with the Whig toast of 'civil and religious liberty all over the world.' Yet it seems to me to be the policy by which this country has grown to its full estate. There have, indeed, been occasions

when we have set ourselves to right what we believed to be wrong, to assist those struggling for liberty of person or of religion, yet in the long run these have done less for liberty on the whole than has the policy of concentrating a steady effort on providing for our own interests at sea. It was the pursuit of this policy which developed both the instrument and the conditions under which it could act—and without the power conferred by this instrument we should have been unable to give effectual help in any cause, however just. The policy which produced our supremacy at sea has contributed to developing the liberties of the world.

COMBINED STRATEGY

Amongst the soldiers this is muttered,
That whilst a field should be despatched
You are disputing of your generals.
One would have lingering wars with little cost ;
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings ;
A third man thinks, without expense at all,
By guileful fair words peace may be obtained.[1]

At the head of one of Marshal Foch's chapters in his 'Principles of War' he places the following quotation from General Von der Goltz: 'Whoever writes on strategy or on tactics ought to confine himself to teaching national strategy and tactics only, for no other can be profitable to the nation he is addressing': and the Marshal remarks that if he were to speak in Brussels instead of in Paris his study would bear on 'a peculiar form of war'; while if he thence proceeded to London, another way of handling the problem of war, another theory of war, would have to be evolved.

The words 'peculiar form of war' apply in a marked degree to the warfare of this country, which, probably more than that of any other, must be a warfare of co-operation of all services. For reasons with which everyone is familiar, this country maintains permanently certain forces for its security: a navy strong enough to

[1] *Henry VI*, Act I, Sc. I.

protect the country itself and its trade; which, since the trade is both vital and universal, and because a navy cannot be improvised, must be large; and land and air forces adequate to garrison the several scattered points or territories of the Empire and protect them either against external attack or internal disturbance. The outbreak of a war thus finds the country in possession of a weapon composed of a large sea force, together with small and widely distributed land and air forces, whose strength is based purely upon certain defensive needs and of which the main concentrations are in the United Kingdom. In what manner shall these three services be used in co-operation to attain our ends in war? That is to say, offensively; since positive aims are impossible of attainment by negative means.

It is with the aspect of co-operation of the three services, considered as a single instrument, that I wish to deal. A thorough examination of the problem is obviously not practicable in a short paper, but it may be possible to indicate some points in connexion with it. The services have to co-operate in all the phases of strategy —but the phase to which I wish to confine myself is that of the grand strategy—the strategy that is concerned with the planning of war in which the co-operation of all the forces which make up the strength of the Empire is essential if proper advantage is to be taken of the whole national strength. Of what elements does this national strength consist?

The strength of a nation, or group of nations like the British Commonwealth, is not measurable solely in terms of its Fleet, its Army and its Air Force. The army can do nothing if it cannot cross the sea, and if it crosses the sea in any strength it needs much tonnage

to carry it. Without a mercantile marine capable of furnishing that tonnage and at the same time of carrying out its duty of supplying the country with its needs, the army is impotent. So also, except in a war with a very near neighbour, is the air service. For aircraft must be carried much, if not all, of the way, and defended during the voyage by fighting ships. It is sometimes forgotten that we are separated from the great majority of any potential enemies by neutral territory which may not be crossed in war; and that it is over 1000 miles to the first British stepping-stone, Gibraltar. Again, a fleet abroad needs constant replenishment of supplies, requiring the service of many vessels, which absorbs still more of the tonnage of the mercantile marine. Thus the power to act in any theatre of operations is largely prescribed by the size of the merchant navy; if an army, or air force, exceed the numbers which can be kept supplied by the mercantile tonnage, it will suffer—as our army in America suffered in the war of the American Revolution, from shortage of tonnage to supply it.

No less important is the size of the merchant navy in the relation to the maintenance of trade. Its size, the numbers of its vessels, have enabled the British mercantile marine to stand the losses it has had to stand in every war. Therein, for example, was one of the sources of our advantages over eighteenth-century France. Equal numerical losses on either side are not equal in result; for what might be a fifty per cent. loss of tonnage to the French marine was a toll of, possibly, not more than ten per cent. of that of Britain.

Thus, clearly, the capacity of the services to act in co-operation in many cases depends upon the capacity of the mercantile marine to provide the carriage to the

objective theatre, precisely as the power of any army to act in a purely land campaign depends upon the capacity of roads, canals or rails to supply its needs; and the mercantile marine thus stands out as an element in national strength, not only in its highly important financial aspect, but also in its military value. A limit is placed upon the power to act by military forces oversea by the need to feed the country and maintain the commerce which finances it. The late war gave us examples of this with which you are certainly familiar.

To say that finance is an element in national strength is, I know, only to repeat a platitude, and I will not dwell upon it. Yet it is an element to the influence of which less attention than it deserves and requires is often paid in the histories of the wars of this country in the past. Geography is another obvious factor,—geography in the terms of the position of this country relative to great centres of trade and the routes thereto; of the existence of British territories in several oceans; of harbours where shelter, supplies and refreshment can be obtained without the harrassing necessity for departure in twenty-four hours that hangs over the man-of-war in a neutral port; and in the possession of bases where repairs can be effected and supplies maintained in security to keep the ships in an effective condition.

Finally, and by no means least, there is the great element of manufacturing power and scientific skill which enables a country to produce, and improve upon, the many instruments required in, or called into being by, war.

How to exploit all these advantages to the full, how to obtain all the benefits which each and several of these

forms of national strength confer, and how to maintain a scientific and truly strategical balance not only between the several fighting services, but also between them and the other national services of production, exchange and distribution constitutes one of the greatest problems of national strategy. When that balance has been determined, we know what forces we are capable of producing and maintaining. Knowing what those forces are, we are placed in a position to consider in what direction expansion from the peace nucleus should be made, and in what manner the expanded forces can most profitably—that is, economically—be employed. And in this there is an important consideration. We must, from the nature of our military needs, begin a great war with a small land force. The initial employment of that force by no means dictates the subsequent employment of whatever force may later be added. These require separate consideration.

From the circumstances of the nature of the strength of this country, and of her needs, there has always lain before our statesmen, in whose hands the direction of war lies, a choice as to how that strength should be exerted.[1] With several methods open to them, it is not only not strange, but very natural, that different views should have been held as to what form of strategy would make use of that strength in the most economical manner—using the word 'economical' in its widest sense of 'good management.' What, in fact, is the form of co-operation best calculated to derive from each of

[1] 'In regard to the scene of the operations of the army, it is a question for the Government and not for me' (Wellington to Lord Bathurst, October 26, 1813). A proposal to transfer the army then in Southern France to Holland had been made by the Czar and forwarded to Wellington.

the factors that make up the natural strength the fullest assistance they are capable of giving?

Recent books have shown us what differences of view there are even to-day. No fewer than three theories of war are to be found in recent publications. It will not, I think, be improper to say that the representative books of three theories are 'Soldiers and Statesmen,' 'The World Crisis,' and the 'Strength of England.'

In his 'World's Crisis,' Mr. Churchill writes: 'Why should the view be limited to the theatre in which the best and largest armies happen to face each other? Sea-power, railway communications, foreign policy, present the means of finding new flanks outside the range of deadlock.' In that sentence he was repeating in substance a part of what has been asked and argued by successions of statesmen and public men for some 240 years. The problem is not always postulated in the precise terms in which Mr. Churchill expresses the contrasted theories: 'To attack the strong or to attack the weak'; it takes different forms, but so closely analogous that the alteration of a few words suffices: 'To attack where we can be strongest and the enemy weakest'; the assumption in each case being the same, namely, that that which is attacked is something of such vital importance to the enemy's power of continuing to fight that the effect of its loss would be decisive.

When we speak of war and co-operation, we need to know what we mean by 'war'; for wars do not all present the same problem and the co-operation needed is not always in the same form.

Broadly speaking, the wars of this country may be divided into three categories. First, the 'small' wars with weak or savage Powers—wars in India, Afghanistan,

Zululand, New Zealand, Burmah, Egypt; wars of security, undertaken for much the same reason that Caesar invaded Gaul. Secondly, those wars in which this country, either single-handed or with an ally or allies, has fought an opponent of first-class strength also single-handed, or with an ally or allies; such are the wars with Spain in 1718, 1727 and 1739; with France in the first stage of the Seven Years War; with the Northern Colonies; with France between 1803 and 1805; or with Russia in 1854–5. Thirdly, there are those wars of Coalitions, in which this country formed one of a great group of Powers opposing another great group: in which, in fact, the world, or what amounts to the world, is belligerent. Such are the wars with Louis XIV, Louis XV, Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, and the recent war with Germany.

In the first of these, sea command not being challenged and the enemies themselves being independent of sea-borne imports or exports, the active strategical functions of the naval arm in co-operation is clearly negligible. The direct operation of sea-power does not come into play against nations independent of external supplies and unable to oppose movements at sea. The decision is obtained by the forces operating on land—that is, the army and the air force.

The second type arises generally—so generally as almost to constitute a characteristic—from a dispute concerning the possession of some tract of territory or some maritime rights overseas; for it is only upon such matters that British policy comes into collision with that of another Power. These are, in fact, those wars with Clausewitz's 'limited object'; and although the object is most usually to be attained by an army operating

in the theatre under dispute, and the part of the naval force is confined to assuring its security on passage, its maintenance, the denial of reinforcements to the enemy, and security against counterstroke, it may be that compliance can, in peculiar conditions, be compelled by naval action. Thus, in the Spanish quarrel of 1727, a naval blockade of Porto Bello was put into force; and in December 1774 Lord Barrington, the Secretary at War, strongly urged that the seven regiments in the Northern Colonies should be withdrawn to Nova Scotia and Canada, and action against the colonists be confined to a naval blockade of Boston. 'I doubt,' he said, 'whether all the troops in North America are enough to subdue it. . . . A conquest by land is unnecessary when the country can be reduced first by distress, and then to obedience, by our Marine totally interrupting all commerce and fishery and even seizing all the ships in the ports with very little expense and bloodshed.' But the circumstances in which this nation is capable of compelling compliance on a first-class Power by naval action alone are so exceptional as in practice to be negligible;[1] and such talk as is sometimes used of a continental nation being in danger of being 'strangled' by the sea-power of Britain alone is the purest nonsense, justifiable neither by economics nor by historical evidence. It is only when in alliance with other Powers that this method of making war has been or can be decisively effective. In the French war of 1756 and the Russian war of 1854, for example, the decision was sought on land, in Canada and in the Crimea. The striking instrument

[1] Nelson, it will be recollected, said that it was to be regretted that England could not decide the fate of Empires by action at sea. The Dutch War of 1652–4 is an exception.

was the army, and the strategical function of the navy was confined to ensuring its secure passage and furnishing cover against counteraction from Brest or the Baltic—though the action in the Baltic also proved diversionary. In neither of these was there any call for a study of alternative means as to how most effectively to employ fleet and army in strategical co-operation other than the act of transport—a 'Q' question rather than a 'G' one. One theatre only was indicated, and there was but one means of attaining the object of the war in that theatre: military victory. The navy's business was to procure or preserve the necessary superiority at sea to enable the British army to reach the territory in dispute, and there to operate. Strategically, the fleet, in fact, was the force securing the line of communications of the army.

When, however, we come to the great wars of coalitions, a wholly different situation arises. Instead of its being in the power of this country to produce superior forces of British troops in the principal theatre, her land forces then form a fraction, and a comparatively small fraction, of the armies in that theatre; a fraction which, compared to the mass, is too small to give to the whole that marked superiority in the field which produces decisive results. For the operations of Treaties of Alliance between continental Powers have the effect of producing an approximate balance of military strength on land. The small British land forces have not been enough in the past to do more than maintain that balance; they did not tip it to the beam. Hence those long-drawn-out struggles, neither group having superiority sufficient to procure a decision. In those wars great differences as to the conduct of our strategy have

invariably arisen. Should our contribution to the Common Cause take the form of an army on the Continent, as a wing of the continental armies in the principal theatre, with a defensive fleet covering the Kingdom and guarding its trade? or should we act as a maritime Power, using our fleet to confer mobility on our army, and thus to multiply its numbers?[1] or should our army be the landing force of the fleet, consummating the command at sea, and depriving the enemy of his external supplies and of all that seaborne commerce means in the life of a nation?

I said earlier that this has been a question for some 240 years—that is, since the time of William III. It is hardly too much to say that before the date of the Grand Alliance of 1689 the word 'war' meant, to British statesmen of the seventeenth century, war at sea; though by the Dutch Treaty of 1675 we engaged to send 10,000 troops to assist them if attacked.

In the first of these wars which began in 1689, the French diversion in Ireland prevented British action on any appreciable scale on the Continent until 1692. Then a form of warfare new to the British of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries began. An army of 40,000 men, the majority hired from German sources,[2] which fought for five years without producing victory, was voted for continental service. This form of war proved far from congenial to a large section of British thought. It was very costly, it achieved not only no decision, but, to all appearance, little results. A commercial and

[1] Wellington, in the end of 1813, was pressed by Lord Bathurst, at the instance of the Czar, to bring the army from Spain to Flanders. He was then at St. Jean de Luz. His reply admirably illustrates that multiplication of numbers which we derived from the power to strike in Spain.

[2] Fortescue, I. 358.

maritime nation, it was held, should make war by commercial and maritime means, and a method of war, in which, as a couplet of 1696 put it, Parliament spent six months in procuring ways and means, which the army spent six months in seeking means and ways of dissipating, was wrong. This maritime school of thought considered that the proper way to cripple France was to cut off her trade. To that end an attempt had been made to induce our Dutch allies to effect a complete isolation of France; but the Dutch views of maritime policy with regard to trading with an enemy being radically different from ours, no effective pressure resulted. The Treaty of Nymwegen, which brought an end to the war, resulted from no victory, but rather from exhaustion, though not such exhaustion as could prevent the outbreak of another war.

The next war began in 1702. Forty thousand troops—of whom eighteen thousand were British—were again voted for the continental war; that is to say, we prepared to take part in the military operations partly by military means and partly by subsidy—for the hiring of troops was in reality subsidy—and at the same time weak expeditions to the West Indies took place, without conclusive results.

The great victories of the Schellenberg and Blenheim did not reconcile to the continental form of warfare those who held the view that Britain could best develop her strength in measures of a maritime order. Her trade was suffering from the French corsairs, and her money was being spent in inconclusive operations on land, which were—so it was held—of no benefit to this country or the cause for which we were at war. That 'two such wise and warlike nations' as Britain and

Holland would in fifteen years of war be unable to prevent losses at sea and in their colonies, and indulge in a 'bloody, lasting and expensive war by land when it was in their power to have brought it to a short conclusion by a vigorous war at sea,' would have been thought unbelievable twenty years earlier, before we were engulfed in this continental school of thought. And on what was this belief of the efficacy of warfare against the enemy's oversea possessions founded? It was on the conviction that the importance of the West India trade to France was so great that she would have been obliged to abandon the struggle if it were stopped. 'Had we once seized the French king's purse in the West Indies . . . he must soon have dropped his sword; for in that case Spain, instead of being an advantage to him, must have proved such a burden as would have broke his back.'[1] We might also have made ourselves masters of Canada, where the French colony was in great want, surviving only by supplies from France, and so effectually have protected our North American plantations. By these means, it was said, we should have used our forces in the manner most consistent with our national strength and most injuriously and decisively to the enemy.

The writer of January 1706 represents the extreme maritime school. He confines his vision to economic warfare. Another in 1707[2] not less condemns what he considers our lack of seeing what powers our maritime strength conferred, and how we had wasted them. Besides 'taking the French king's purse' in the West

[1] *The way to retrieve the glory of the English Arms by Sea as it is done on Land*, Jan. 4, 1706.

[2] *An Enquiry into the Causes of our Naval Miscarriages*, London, 1707.

Indies, we could dominate events in Europe. When the attempt on Cadiz failed, we should have seized Mahon, whereby we should have been able to prevent the French from sending troops into Italy, or maintaining those already there ; and we should also have ruined the trade of Marseilles. Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, seeing us thus masters at sea, would have broken away from their French masters : in which, if you read for the Mediterranean principalities the Balkan states of to-day, you have a reasoning not unlike that used in relation to the late war.

Marlborough himself had, however, anticipated this writer. After the disappointing campaign of 1705, in which the defensive tactics of the French in the Flanders theatre had frustrated all his efforts to obtain a decision, he proposed to change the strategy and, transferring a large body to Italy, make his offensive there where the army was weak, remaining upon the defensive in Flanders. This is a marked point in the extension of the maritime school of thought. The fleet and army are not only a means of economic exhaustion as they were to earlier writers ; the fleet is also a means of transferring the operations to a more favourable theatre, where the enemy is weak and vulnerable ; and it contains the germ of that great strategist's later idea of striking at Toulon and the French fleet.

The classical exponent of the maritime school of thought of that period appears four years later in the person of Dean Swift, who, in ' The Conduct of the Allies,' condemned the policy of making our major effort on land, both in the 1689–97 war and in that still raging. In entering war, Swift remarks (and though Swift is the writer, he is putting the views of the statesmen

of his party) that a ruler must consider his financial condition, the fullness of his coffers, his debts, his people numerous and rich by long peace and free trade, not overburdened with taxes. Instead of so doing, the first war was conducted on loans. Finance as an element in national strength, in fact, takes a predominant place; the importance of specie forms a great part of his argument. France, for example, was calculated to have received 400 millions in specie alone from the Spanish West Indies, without which she could not have paid her troops; and we ourselves needed it equally, for without it we could not hire our Hanoverians, Hessians, and Danes; indeed in 1705, owing to arrears in their payment, the Danes were expected not to fight.[1] Without money war must come to an end, and as the West Indies were the source, or believed to be the source, of money, it is natural that eyes should be turned in their direction.

Again, Swift refers to the objects of the war, which were (he says) to make France acknowledge William III and to recover Hudson's Bay. 'But during that whole war the sea was almost entirely neglected and the greater part of six millions annually employed to enlarge the frontiers of the Dutch. For the King was a General, not an Admiral.' The result, Swift claimed, was that we had ten years' fighting, lost 100,000 men, incurred a debt of 20 millions, and made a peace which brought no advantage to England; though much to our allies, the Empire and the Dutch.

We had done the same in the war then still in progress. In nine years it had cost us 60 millions, and, after repeated and unexpected successes, had put us in a worse condition not only than our allies but even than

[1] Atkinson, *Marlborough and the British Army*, p. 283.

our conquered enemies. And this result was due to our having fought in a manner which least answered our ends, that is, as a land Power; and not at all where we could most have weakened the enemy and enriched ourselves, that is, at sea and in the colonies. We were bound by Treaty to assist the Dutch with 10,000 men if attacked by France, and this was necessary, proper and within our capacity; but that should have been the limit of our commitments on the Continent. We should have obliged Holland to exert herself to defend her frontiers, which, when we came to her help, she avoided doing. What we could have done would have been to raise 100,000 men 'by sea and land' and directed our efforts to that theatre where the enemy had vital interests and could least withstand an assault—the sea and the plantations. 'We have now for ten years together turned the whole force and expense of the war where the enemy was best able to hold us at bay . . . utterly neglecting that part which would have saved and gained us many millions . . . which would have soonest weakened the enemy, and must either have promised a speedy peace or enabled us to go on with the war.' With bitter irony the Dean remarks: 'Ten glorious campaigns are passed and now at last, like the sick man, we are just expiring with all sorts of good symptoms. Did the Advisers of this war suppose it would continue ten years without expecting the successes we have had, and yet at the same time determine that France must be reduced and Spain subdued by employing our whole strength upon Flanders?' The troops of our first quota, in co-operation with those of the Emperor and the Dutch, were ample for a defensive in the Low Countries. The rest of our strength should

have been used offensively oversea where a decision was easy to obtain. 'I have sometimes wondered how it came to pass that the style of Maritime Powers, by which our Allies in a sort of contemptuous manner sometimes couple us with the Dutch, did never put us in mind of the sea. And while some politicians were showing us the way to Spain by Flanders, others by Savoy and Naples, that the West Indies should never come into their hands. With half the charge we have been at we might have maintained our original quota of 40,000 men in Flanders and at the same time by our Fleets and naval forces have so distressed the Spaniards in the North and South Seas of America as to prevent any returns of money from thence except in our own bottoms. This is what best became us to do as a Maritime Power; this with any common degree of success would soon have compelled France to the necessities of a peace and Spain to acknowledge the Archduke. . . . It was the Kingdom's misfortune that the sea was not the Duke of Marlborough's element, otherwise the whole force of the war would infallibly have been bestowed there, infinitely to the advantage of this country.' Moreover, while this maritime Power had sent over 60,000 troops to Flanders, and borne the burden of the sea campaign, our allies, whose territories we were defending, had failed us both on sea and land. We were left to fight the battles in defence of the Austrian Netherlands while the Emperor turned his forces at one time to repressing his discontented subjects in Hungary, and at another, deliberately detached, to take Naples, 12,000 to 15,000 men from the expedition by which we might have taken Toulon, to the incomparable advantage of the common cause.

I make no attempt to examine the justice of the contentions of these writers of 1706, 1707 or 1711, nor to determine whether the results of operations against the enemy's colonial possessions would have produced the results estimated. My object is merely to indicate the existence of this school of thought and the reasons for it, and to point out the three broad lines along which its supporters proposed to make use of our national power. The one was for making our effort in the West Indies, as the great source of French financial strength; the second includes in the effort both the West Indies and the Mediterranean, seizing a base at Mahon for the latter purpose; while the third, Marlborough's, is for making it by military effort where the enemy is most weak, that is, in the Mediterranean; to the military effects of which would be added the economic effects of cutting off important trade of Southern France.

Precisely the same controversy arose over the strategy of the next general war—that of the Austrian Succession. Again the two schools came into collision, and the arguments were on the same lines. A sea Power, said one of the members of Parliament, should make war by sea, using its army where it could produce the greatest effect, thereby both husbanding and increasing our financial resources. To pour out money in expensive and indecisive land campaigns with allies who invariably failed to fill their obligations was to court ruin. 'Our enemies abroad are the Spaniards and the French and our enemies at home are placemen and tax-gatherers.'[1] Far less money than was spent upon continental campaigns would have made us secure at sea, and our predominance at sea would enable us wholly to exhaust

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, 1751.

France and Spain for want of the money without which they could not continue to fight. 'The most effectual way to assist our allies would always be to prosecute the war by sea and in America. We may conquer from our enemies, they can conquer nothing from us.' Constantly recurring is the view that the basis of France's strength lay in her foreign trade, and the importance of their trade as a means of sustaining war. 'These advantages (of increase of trade) gained by the French are conspicuous from the immense sums which they draw annually from other countries, and which enable them to maintain powerful armies, and afford such plentiful subsidies and pensions to several powers and people in Europe. From hence they build their ships of war and maintain seamen to supply them.' [1]

Admiral Vernon, speaking of our making war on the Continent, advanced the view that, even though the object of the war were the preservation of the Balance of Power, we should confine ourselves to the sea. 'The Balance of Power,' he said, 'may more probably be overturned by the French improvements in their commerce and colonies than by their making conquests upon the Continent of Europe. . . . In the late war, our business was to endeavour to possess ourselves of, or destroy, all the French settlements in America, Africa and Asia, and not to allow ourselves to be diverted from this scheme, by any conquests they had made or could have made in Europe.'

The reply of the supporters of continental operations was that we were bound by Treaty to defend Holland;

[1] 'Two letters concerning some further advantages and improvements that may seem necessary to be made on the taking and keeping of Cape Breton,' London, 1746.

that troops alone could defend it; that if it and the Austrian Netherlands were conquered, the enemy would have the fleets and harbours of those countries at their disposal; and that, if they should have once established a clear military superiority in Europe, they would be able to divert their money from their army to their fleet, and finally conquer this country by sea. The maritime school did not deny the need to contribute on land to the defence of Holland and Belgium; but they protested that Flanders should be for this country a defensive theatre. Our own offensive should be developed oversea by combined use of the fleet and army where the enemy had a vital interest which he must be too weak to defend so long as our sea-power was predominant.

The Seven Years War produced a spirited series of discussions on the same point.[1] The arguments centred upon whether this country should take any part whatever in Frederick the Great's affairs, which were no concern of ours and only came into existence after we were already engaged in our fight with France for the security of the Northern Colonies. The outstanding pamphlet on this theme took the strongest possible line in opposing the continental war. The defence on the military side, of sending an army to Hanover, was that our support of Frederick was an essential military diversion, by which France was prevented from concentrating her efforts upon her sea-power; on the political side it was defended on the ground that we were bound to

[1] *Considerations of the Present German War*, London, 1760. *A full and candid answer to a pamphlet entitled 'Considerations of the Present German War,'* London, 1760. *The Conduct of the Ministry impartially examined*, etc. . . . London, 1760.

assist him. The themes are clearly contradictory. The writer of the principal tract of the time denied wholly the political obligation to protect him, whether as a Protestant Hero or for any other reason; and remarks that, even if we were so bound, we were not bound as to how we should do it; and that to send an army to the main continental theatre was by no means the only measure open to us. For we could also attack the French on their coasts (as Frederick himself proposed) and in the East and West Indies so much the more vigorously if our energies were not being consumed in Germany. Instead of transferring the English war with France into Germany, where decisive results were impossible to attain, we should utilise our strength far better at sea and in the West Indies. There we could achieve decisive results; and not only would a decision in this war be reached, but, by eliminating the colonial causes of future quarrels, we should also put it out of the power of France to injure us; for it would totally disable her from raising maritime strength against us; for maritime strength arose from foreign—mainly colonial—seaborne trade. 'Let the Empire suffer the French armies to march from the Rhine to the utmost Danube and pillage every city from Mannheim to Belgrade; all these cannot build them a single frigate to annoy our coast with.' Nor indeed would even this happen, for the source of their wealth, the islands and their trade, being destroyed or taken from them, the French could not afford to raise the armies on a scale sufficient for European conquest and domination. Nor is this view wholly without some contemporary confirmation in French views. M. de Flestay, writing in 1759, remarked that the English, by their sovereignty

at sea, increase their own wealth and prevent France from making use of hers; the war demonstrating how with her wealth she assists the continental armies, who put it out of the power of France to use against the English the resources which otherwise might have been the case.[1]

Intervention on the Continent brought none of these advantages to Britain. France could always bring forces into action so superior to those of ourselves and our allies that a decisive victory—a victory with definite strategical results, not a mere tactical success—was impossible. 'While the English Councils persist firmly to engage in a land war with France, they ever must be inferior, and ever must act only on the defensive.' For, the writer argued, it was beyond our power to raise either more money or men. Our agriculture and manufactures must both be maintained if the nation was to live, and men would be spared from these essential services for the army; while to spend our money on foreign troops was merely to plunge deeper into debt and ruin ourselves. Again, observe how strongly the financial point is kept to the front, while the need for manufacture to continue also comes into view. The sentence above has a ring of modernity about it. The late war showed that we must maintain a proper relation between the fighting and those other services behind the lines which furnish the means of fighting—munitions and ships—and the means of keeping the nation alive—food, and trade to pay for it. In that relation lies the kernel of the problem of co-operation—the proper utilisation of our available man power. Our predecessors were not blind to it.

[1] McLennan, *Louisbourg from its Foundation to its Fall*, p. 311.

The next great upheaval was the French Revolution. To follow the vast struggle from 1793 to 1815, and analyse at every stage the direction of British effort, would not be possible here. It will be enough to draw attention to certain broad facts. We do not now find the British army acting as it did in the previous great wars of coalitions, that is, taking a part as a portion of the army in the principal theatre. There is nothing to compare with Marlborough's campaigns in Flanders and Germany, or the campaigns which included Dettingen, Fontenoy or Minden, until we come to Waterloo in 1815 ; unless we should include the wretched campaign of 1794. The differences now are not between the 'continental school' and the 'maritime school,' but between two branches of the maritime school ; that branch which would use the fleet and army to attack the enemy in his colonies or trade, and that which would use it diversionally in support of the operations of the main continental armies. It was the former idea which informed those West Indian operations which wasted our armies so terribly from 1794 to 1796. The underlying purpose of those expeditions was the same as that of those writers of earlier times ; by the economic pressure resulting from the crippling of French commerce to cause her to abandon her resistance. The view that this policy was merely one of 'filching French sugar islands' has no relation to fact. When the Revolutionary war began, French finance was known to be chaotic, so chaotic that upon the monetary theory of war it appeared impossible for France long to continue fighting from sheer lack of money. The armies of the First Coalition were considered ample to defeat the rabble which then constituted the French armies ;

joined to an effective destruction of commerce, it was believed France could not continue to oppose her enemies. So short, indeed, was it supposed that the war would last that extra taxation was not imposed in this country for the first two years, to the detriment of our later financial power. How wrong the idea of the short war was we need not here pause to discuss in considering the theory of employment of British force; it is the beliefs upon which it was founded that are important. These were set out by Dundas, the Secretary of State for War, in 1801, after eight years of war. While our limited population, he said, did not admit of extensive continental operations, our importance depended on commerce and navigation. Hence, 'be the causes of the war what they may, the primary object of our attention ought to be by what means we can effectually increase those resources upon which depend our naval superiority and at the same time diminish or appropriate to ourselves those which might otherwise enable the enemy to contend with us in that respect. . . . We ought, therefore, as early as we can at the commencement of a war, to cut off the commercial resources of our enemies, as by so doing we infallibly weaken or destroy their naval resources. Colonial commerce being of particular importance, it is as much the duty of a British administration to cut off the colonial resources of the enemy as it would be that of a general to destroy or intercept his enemy's magazines.'[1] He summed up his doctrine of war in the following emphatic terms, which explain his war policy: 'So much do I consider offensive operations against the colonial possessions of our enemies as *the first object* to be attended to in almost

[1] Debate of March 25, 1801, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 36, p. 1071.

every war in which Great Britain can be engaged, that I have no hesitation in laying it down as a fundamental maxim in the policy of this country, that, at the breaking out of hostilities, exertions of that nature ought to admit of no limitation except what may arise from the necessary reserve of force to be kept at home for the security of the United Kingdom and Ireland.' If a continental war should be in progress, the need was the greater, in order 'to furnish our manufacturers with markets, of many of which we must be deprived, as a substitute for them.' This doctrine that our first business in war was to assure our maritime superiority had, he said, governed our war policy from 1793 to 1801; and it was with the same maritime object we sent expeditions to Holland, Ferrol and Cadiz, the objectives of which were the enemies' fleets, or to certain oversea bases of supply.

Like all generalisations, this of Dundas does not constitute a complete statement of the British policy; but it does represent a broad belt of conduct running through our operations, including the last, information of the result of which had not reached Dundas at the time of speaking—the expedition to Egypt.

Dundas has what we might call a 'bad military press,' and there is no doubt of the failure of his West Indian policy. But whatever we may think of the views themselves, there is this of importance in his statement. He attempts to lay down 'a fundamental maxim of the policy of this country'; a doctrine, in fact, of British war. And if his direction of war failed to give scope to the power of the army used diversionally in European waters, weight must be given to the fact that diversions imply co-ordinated action with other military forces,

and that there was almost permanently an uncertainty as to conduct of our allies in Vienna, St. Petersburg and Berlin. If M. Thugut could have made up his mind as to the forthcoming campaign, it is, I believe, not impossible that a British army might have turned the scale at Marengo. 'The three objects which any statesman at the commencement of a war would wish us to attain,' Dundas said in November 1795, 'viz. Martinique, Cape Nicola Mole, and the Cape of Good Hope, were every one in our possession.' That is to say, bases, without which the enemy could not effectively act, were a first objective of our combined strategy.

Dundas was speaking in March 1801 when negotiations for peace were beginning. Two years of peace and two of a single-handed struggle with France were to follow before the short-lived Third Coalition was formed. The British form of war remained of the maritime order; that is, either maritime blockade, operations for the capture of enemy naval bases, or of their fleets, or movements of comparatively small bodies of troops to positions of which strategical importance was their relation towards the action of the fleet. The Spanish rising in 1808 offered the opportunity, which had not hitherto been offered in the struggle, to make a formidable attack of the nature of Marlborough's Mediterranean scheme; a diversion on the grand scale, the effects of which a sentence in a despatch of Wellington's of December 21, 1813, summarises, 'By having kept in the field about 30,000 men in the Peninsula, the British Government have now for five years given employment to 200,000 French troops, of the best Napoleon had.'

The policy of the war in the Peninsula was no more generally accepted than earlier policies had been. It

was only maintained by Wellington's personal influence. Into the many reasons, some certainly factious, for opposition to its continuance I cannot here enquire, but not the least was that drain upon the national resources which formed so much of the substance of those earlier opponents to the use of large forces upon the Continent. Fortunately, Wellington was able to make clear the effect this form of maritime strategy was producing, as the above quotation from his despatch of December 1813 illustrates.

How greatly the importance imputed throughout that century to West Indian trade affected the arguments must be obvious. It was believed to be essential both to our enemies and to ourselves. The writers of the period of the Schellenberg and of Blenheim, Swift, the speakers and writers, statesmen, seamen and merchants of the fifth decade of the eighteenth century, Mauduit, Hardwicke, and the school represented by Dundas, are all in agreement over a period of 100 years that France and Spain must succumb if attacked in the sources of their wealth, and that those sources lay in that region. Their predecessors of the preceding century had held the same view about Spain. Whether the whole idea of French dependence was correct or incorrect we must leave to historical economists to unravel; and here again is a feature of co-operation, the co-operation of the economist in war.

It is possible to observe one striking point. The blow of the West Indies is, as Dundas calls it, a blow at the enemy's magazines. It is a blow in its main conception, less at the nation itself than at the nation's means of continuing the war. What has been called the 'overthrow theory' of war—the total reduction of the

enemy by the most extensive measures against his national life—had hardly come into being until the time of Napoleon, though it would not be right to say that it was wholly absent as an element in the earlier times, examples of which are to be found in the attempts in the Anglo-Dutch Alliance, the cutting off of grain from Africa ordered in 1709,[1] and Marlborough's idea of applying the final twist of the screw after Ramillies by the same means. Nevertheless, it is rather as a blow at the enemy's power of maintaining his armies that this economic pressure has been generally advocated. It was, I am inclined to think, in this relation, as fully as in her subsidies, that the alliance value of Britain was so clearly recognised by continental Powers.

The importance of those islands was, however, not wholly concerned with offence. It related also to defence, for the security of British trade with the Indies was a cardinal article of British faith. Nelson speaks of himself as one brought up in the 'good old school,' and taught to appreciate the value of the West Indies; and that teaching was one at least of the parents of his pursuit of Villeneuve thither. When, in September 1804, he is in doubt what to do if the French should slip to sea with 7000 troops, he says that he has considered whither the French may go. He has weighed Ireland against the West Indies and the latter throws the beam up to the ceiling. For if those islands were lost 'England would become so clamorous for peace that we should humble ourselves.' The basis of the theory —that France must succumb if she lost her West Indian

[1] When an order was prepared for Sir John Norris (Nov. 29) by Lord Sunderland, instructing the Mediterranean Fleet to seize all Genoese ships unless they immediately ceased exporting corn to France.

sources of wealth—certainly appears to suffer a blow in the experience of the Napoleonic wars, from almost the beginning of which that commerce died; yet she fought for twenty years afterwards. Whether, however, she could have done so if she had been opposed by forces as nearly equal in leadership and in greater co-operation, as she had been in the earlier wars, is another question. The conditions were markedly different.

All of those conditions affecting the West Indies have gone with the old colonial system, the mercantilist theory, and other matters of the past. But their disappearance does not leave us with a clean slate; for other factors have arisen in world affairs to take their place and to split our opinions. A great world war of the future—if it should arise—will, as those of the past have done, infallibly present problems of the same nature as all of those of the past, including that of 1914, have presented. Again there will be a choice to be made between one theatre and another, a determination to be made as to the most proper way in which to use our strength. Only mental laziness will allow us to answer the question with copy-book maxims and repetitions of the definitions of the principles of war, translated into terms to suit one's own opinion or one's own service. Professor Webster, in his admirable 'Foreign Policy of Castlereagh,' remarks that British statesmen of the period after 1815 were less conscious than modern historians of the fact that Napoleon had in reality been beaten by the blockade; and that in consequence of the part Great Britain played as a military power in those later years of the struggle with France, the military service took a higher place in public esteem than the naval. Though the fundamental principles of strength

at sea were not abandoned in theory, they were in practice, submerged by the influence which the great campaigns on land exercised upon their minds. The result was that the navy deteriorated, the Admiralty was ruined as an organism for war, and the use to which the two services were put—the British form of warfare—was lost sight of.

We shall expose ourselves to danger of the same order if we do not think of war in the terms of national strategy. The very word 'co-operation' implies agreement in a common doctrine of British strategy; it means that the same theory of British war is held by all parties concerned. I have used examples from the past to show that even when we had two fighting services there was a difference of opinion as to how they should be employed. My reading of the histories of those wars leads me to the conviction that, though one doctrine usually prevailed, the efforts to attain the object—victory—on the lines of that doctrine were definitely weakened by concessions to the other; that the existence of two doctrines led, in fact, to our committing the fundamental strategical error of conducting simultaneously what were intended to be two decisive offensives. 'The only mode in which we can be successful,' said Wellington in 1813, 'is by the application of our means to one object.'[1] The result of acting otherwise must be that neither can be strong enough to be decisive. To examine my reasons for this conviction would take me too long; I can better leave those of you who are interested to make the study for yourselves, a method of acquiring an opinion far more fruitful than listening to one ready made.

[1] Wellington to Sir Sidney Smith, November 14, 1813.

If it be correct that at the same time we conducted two sets of operations simultaneously, each as a main offensive but neither in strength nor scale sufficient to be decisive; and if by that divided attention we weakened, be it ever so little, the effective power of both offensives, the conclusion is that we managed our forces without proper economy; that we did not derive from our peculiar strength all that it had to offer. And if that be what happened in past wars, when we had but two fighting services, when trade and manufacture, important as they were to national and military strength, were by no means so vital as they are to-day, to what degree is the danger increased of our wasting our strength by failure to co-operate in this sphere of thought when we have three, and when manufacturing power plays a far greater part in war? And not only wasting our strength in war, but in all probability wasting our substance in peace in the creation of instruments unsuited to our needs. If we should suppose that those responsible for naval force should make their calculations of its needs in war upon the basis of offensive action on the purely maritime basis, an army upon putting every man into the fighting line on the lines of a continental army and as an adjunct of it in every conceivable circumstance, while an air force bases its war requirements upon conducting an independent war of its own upon the civil population of the enemy, we shall run no small risk of being unable not only to feed the nation, but to supply those several forces with the prodigious quantity of munitions they would require. I need, I hope, hardly draw you a picture of the sort of confusion, the waste of effort, and the indeterminate results for an inordinate expenditure which would follow such a practice. I am

very far from saying that there is a probability that a situation exists on so exaggerated a scale as I have presented; but I do venture the opinion that, as we have suffered from lack of co-operation on a large scale in the past, we cannot flatter ourselves that we shall wholly avoid the dangers which lead to such suffering unless we think this matter over thoroughly in peace.

SOME INFLUENCES OF SEA-POWER IN THE WAR WITH GERMANY

In the struggle from 1914 to 1918, sea-power played the same part as in earlier wars. Changes of material affected the tactical methods of its employment, but the pressure which lay within its power directly to impose, and the capacity it conferred of transferring troops and maintaining the Allies, were different only in degree from what they were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Napoleon's advent caused war upon land to assume a more comprehensive character than it had borne in the eighteenth century. Naval warfare has indeed always been of an essentially national character, not confined merely to struggles between fleets, but aiming directly at the resources of the enemy nation; yet it has never been conducted with greater rigour than in the recent war. This result is due not to changes either in international law or in its application, but to the conditions of the struggle. France was never so completely surrounded by her enemies, either in the days of Louis XIV, Louis XV, or Napoleon, as Germany was by the end of 1915; nor, great as was the dependence of France in the eighteenth century upon her commerce for the maintenance of a healthy internal condition, was it so great as that of a modern State upon imports from

abroad for the life of the individual citizen and the materials for the implements of war. More self-supporting both as to food and military requirements than the Central Powers of the twentieth century, she was at the same time less isolated; while her greater conquests placed her in possession of extensive territories from which she could draw supplies, and made her capable of maintaining a very long struggle. But even under those conditions she was distressed to the utmost by the action of sea-power. With such a precedent it was not unnatural that expectations should have been held that modern Germany would not be able to hold out long when invested on two land fronts and by the ocean.

The oceanic investment called 'the blockade' has formed the subject of strong expressions of opinion by German writers, as a 'defiance of the laws of nations' and an act of inhumanity. Yet German philosophers, soldiers, and propagandists had long since established the doctrine that War—'the supreme act of the State'—was no longer an affair of armies but of nations. The army became the nation, the nation the army; and each individual had his part to play in the struggle. The applicability of the same doctrine to the sea was inconvenient to a military state which was ringed round by a maritime coalition. Yet earlier German military writers, such as Von der Goltz, Bernhardi, and Maltzahn, had well understood that no Power possessing strength at sea would fail to use it as it was used by the Entente navies.

The use of the power to bring pressure upon a nation by cutting off its supplies from abroad has, indeed, never been neglected by any naval Power.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, when Spain was our enemy, British strategy aimed throughout at preventing her from obtaining those supplies of bullion from her American Empire upon which depended not only her military effort, but also her national economic life. When Holland and England were at once commercial and military rivals, the national life of each was struck at through the oversea commerce which sustained it. Grass did not grow in the streets of Amsterdam without causing suffering to the inhabitants. The British struggles with France, in so far as they were conducted on the sea—always our principal theatre of war—were marked by the same characteristic. The drain upon the life of France under Louis XIV, brought about by attack on her commerce, is well known; under the Republic the battle of the First of June was fought to prevent a supply of food from reaching France, then suffering from scarcity as the result of a bad harvest. Yet until Germany found the scales weighted against her, neither her historians nor her strategists have attempted to condemn measures of sea warfare on the grounds of the resulting distress to the civilian population.

Dependent upon the sea for its prosperity as every country was in the past, this dependence has increased with the changed conditions brought about by the developments of modern life. The war has brought this into striking prominence, though it seems doubtful if its significance had been fully appreciated before. No European country is wholly independent of oversea supplies of raw materials, though some, as we have seen, are capable of existing for a prolonged time without them. War brings about an enhanced demand. The

complex elements of motor transport, munitions, and machinery of all kinds employed by an army, call to their aid so vast and varied a supply of material that hardly a substance can be found that does not, in some form, contribute to the prosecution of the war; and of these some are bound to be the products of other countries. Thus, without oil, neither tanks, aircraft, motor transport, nor submarines can be moved, and a country which does not possess oil within her borders must import it from elsewhere; and 'elsewhere' may be approachable only across the sea or through the lines of an enemy army.

Not only, however, are almost all substances the raw materials of some form of munition, but the populations themselves are elements of military strength. The munition maker, male and female, contributes to the fighting power of the army, and as such is a factor of his power to resist the enemy. No writers, we have said, have more clearly pronounced the doctrine of national war than those of Germany, who lay stress upon the need of sustaining the moral of the population and depressing that of the enemy; nor did our late enemies fail to use every measure calculated to produce those results. The submarine campaign aimed, like the blockade, at compelling the Entente to abandon the struggle owing to the shortage of food it would cause; the aerial and coastal bombardments were operative far more in their moral than their physical or material effects. Themselves aiming at moral results by striking at the civil populations, it is singular that able German writers, when the time for propagandist argument has passed, should continue to denounce what they call the violations of international law. Their own acts

constitute a refutation of their complaints no less powerful than history and the writings of their countrymen before 1914.

The first act of the British navy was to establish itself in the two great waterways through which trade reaches Germany. The French navy, after passing its colonial troops across the Mediterranean, took a corresponding position in the approaches to Austria through the Adriatic. The German war directors were faced with a choice of action. Their principal fleet, inferior in battleship strength to the British, but possessing a superiority of torpedo craft, might at once put all things to the hazard of a general engagement at sea, thus to prevent a blockade from being established at all; or it might withhold action, hoping, by the action of its lesser vessels, either surface or submarine torpedo craft, or by mining, to reduce the strength of the British fleet to a point at which a fleet action presented reasonable hopes of success. These views were the subject of much difference of opinion. Grand-Admiral Von Tirpitz states that the Chancellor, the Chief of the Cabinet, and the Chief of the Naval Staff were opposed to the former, while he himself 'fought against the withholding of the fleet from the pursuit of its great aim and object.' What the result would have been if Von Tirpitz's policy had been followed we cannot say; but so long as the German fleet did not attempt to break down the control of commerce exercised by the wants of the Entente, the effects of that control could only increase. If the war were short, as the great General Staff was confident it would be, sea-power could not have developed its full effect; since it is, in the nature of things, a slow-acting weapon, especially against a

country well stocked from the beginning, hastily purchasing all it could from abroad, and capable of maintaining itself for a considerable time.

The defeat on the Marne showed that the dream of a short war was an illusion; by the end of 1914 no doubt existed but that the war would be prolonged, and that the cutting off of supplies would play an important part. These supplies were of two kinds. Not only were the materials classed as 'contraband,' from their applicability to the service of the army, being stopped, but also supplies for the whole people. Tirpitz correctly foresaw the result when he wrote on March 13, 1915, that 'gradually the blockade of Germany must affect the whole life of the nation.' Two years later the situation was becoming increasingly oppressive. 'If the war lasted,' wrote Ludendorff at the end of 1916, 'our defeat seemed inevitable. Economically we were in a highly unfavourable position for a war of exhaustion. At home our strength was badly shaken. Questions of the supply of foodstuffs caused great anxiety, and so, too, did questions of moral. We were not undermining the spirits of the enemy populations with starvation blockades and propaganda.' [1]

There is a close association between the life of the nation and the spirit of the fighting services. 'The tremendous moral impetus,' says Falkenhayn, writing at the end of 1915, 'which the field-army received from the spirit prevailing among the vast majority of the people at home played an overwhelming part.' [2] As the moral of the fleet and army was largely a reflection of that of the civil population, so the depression of

[1] *My War Memories*, p. 307.
[2] Falkenhayn, *General Headquarters 1914-1916*, p. 193.

the national spirits tended to affect the fighting men. Nevertheless, there is little to show that any serious inroad into naval moral occurred before the autumn of 1917, nor, in the absence of more information on so complicated a matter of crowd psychology, would it be proper to attribute the eventual decay to any one cause. That the blockade contributed to that decay and accentuated the depression caused by military losses, can hardly be doubted. 'The waning moral at home,' says Ludendorff, 'was intimately connected with the food situation. . . . In wide quarters a certain decay of bodily and mental power of resistance was noticeable, resulting in an unmanly and hysterical state of mind which, under the spell of enemy propaganda, encouraged the pacifist leanings of many Germans. In the summer of 1917 my first glimpse of this situation gave me a great shock.' [1]

Making due allowance for the desire of a military commander to attribute failure to any other cause than defeat in the field, it seems proper to accept the evidence of the many writers that the blockade, by affecting the stamina of the people, contributed in an important degree to the eventual collapse. A successful action against the British Grand Fleet would have gone far towards preventing this, and the prospects of success were greatest in the early days of the war before additions to its units increased its initial superiority. The efforts to reduce the British fleet in the manner chosen, by attrition, were not effective. The small number of submarines available in 1914 cruised in the North Sea and Channel and secured some successes, but none of a character to weaken the hold of the navy. Some ships

[1] *My War Memories*, p. 349.

capable of useful services were sunk, the dispositions of the cruising squadrons employed in the northern area had to be modified. But no relaxation of the isolating action of the fleet was brought about, nor was the entry of supplies to Germany rendered any easier. The German minelayers were more successful in the combination of circumstances, to which the submarines contributed, that brought about the loss of a modern battleship—the *Audacious*— a serious blow at a moment when the British superiority of ships of the line was not great; and the submarine and minelayer imposed upon us the necessity of constituting that great auxiliary patrol flotilla which absorbed so many men and formed so important a factor in the subsequent years of war. It was fortunate that the submarine campaign was started on small lines, as this afforded us time to organise the measures to meet it. Our difficulties would have been far greater if the campaign had been withheld, as Tirpitz desired, until the German flotilla could strike us, unprepared, with great strength. It was a mistake on the part of the Germans to drift into a new campaign and deny themselves all the advantages of surprise.

Besides using their strength to bring direct pressure upon the enemy peoples, the navies of the Entente had the immediate and vastly important task of assuring the passage of British and colonial troops into France. How immediate this was can be measured by the dates on which the British army came into action in August 1914. If the German fleet had been able to delay the arrival of the Expeditionary Force by blocking the Channel ports of departure and arrival—many of which were undefended—or by other means, the battle of the Marne, the turning point of the war, would have

assumed a different complexion. The inactivity of the German fleet at this juncture betrays a complete misconception on the part of the higher German authorities of the part which the British army was capable of playing. The urgent need of troops in France affected the defence of trade. Convoys of troop transports from Australia, India, and Canada needed escorts, for German cruisers were still at large. These attacked trade with some freedom in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, did some measureable damage, and were not all disposed of until April 1915; but they were unable seriously to affect the course of trade or the stability of British credit. Far less could they do anything to assist in relieving the pressure that was beginning to be put upon their country. German commerce carried in German bottoms ceased.

Supplies, nevertheless, continued to reach Germany through neutral countries. This is one of the most delicate and difficult of the problems with which sea-power is faced in exercising its strength. The interests of neutral Powers are bound to be interfered with in any commercial war—even one only of tariffs—and the more completely a navy attempts to obtain the full effect of which it is capable, the more it risks intervention on the part of those who suffer. This truth had been illustrated by the Armed Neutralities of past days. The tendency of international agreements in recent years had been towards securing the rights of neutrals; raw materials had been made free goods in all circumstances; and, though the needs of Germany in matters contraband could not be supplied by her own ports, other channels were available through Holland, Denmark, the Scandinavian Powers, and, for some time, Italy. Anticipating

a short war, and confident that she could obtain all raw materials directly, and contraband indirectly, Germany believed that her weakness at sea would not affect her operations on land. She does not appear to have realised that 'absolute war' is no less applicable to sea than to land warfare.

To stop all supplies destined for the Central Powers could not be done by naval action only. Neutral waters could be reached and used; and the immunity of raw materials could not at once be removed. Iron ore from Sweden, needed for munitions, could be embarked at Narvik, carried down to the southern point of Norway within territorial waters, and thence across the Skagerak to Dutch waters and Rotterdam, whence it reached Essen, by canal. Even if captured in the short stretch of open water it could not be condemned. Cotton, silk, wool, oil-seeds, rubber, raw hides, and other materials, all of importance either for clothing or munitioning the army, were free at first, perhaps for too long. On September 21, unwrought copper, lead, glycerine, ferro-chrome, haematite and magnetic iron ore, rubber, hides, and skins were added to the conditional contraband list, which steadily increased its scope. Although the term 'blockade' is applied to this, no 'blockade' was ever declared, for neutral ports cannot be blockaded. But it was possible to restrict trade to neutral ports, and gradually to obtain a control of all sea-borne trade which permitted innocent goods to pass, while contraband was held up. The word 'contraband' changed its meaning; originally referring only to goods of direct service to the army, it was extended by logic and necessity to the whole of the enemies' trade.

Food was a matter of greater difficulty; the British

attitude at an earlier date had been strongly against treating as contraband food destined for the civil population. But a decree of the German Government in October that stocks of grain and flour were to be seized, furnished a strong argument for permitting no further supplies to enter, since it would be impossible to discriminate between civil and military supplies. The German submarine campaign against merchant ships began in February 1915; it threw to the winds all restraints which had hitherto been accepted in sea warfare. Retaliation followed on March 11, when all limits of contraband were abolished by a British Order-in-Council, which further laid down that if it could be proved that goods came from, belonged to, or were going to the enemy, no matter who were the consignors or consignees, the ships carrying the goods could be sent into port and placed in the Prize Court. In this manner Germany's submarine campaign served to harden the measures against herself.

The submarine campaign, while it was bound to give rise to complications with neutrals of a more serious nature than those likely to result from the ordinary methods of visit and search, could only hope in its early stages to be used as a lever for mitigating the severity of the extension of contraband employed by the Entente. But it was unlikely that any mitigation would be made in the Order as to food, even if the campaign were dropped, nor, indeed, did the enemy have any hopes that he could secure much relief. The military importance of materials such as rubber, copper, and cotton was so outstandingly clear that their entry could obviously not be allowed by the maritime Powers.

The answer to the submarine blows did not lie in

abandoning the pressure the sea Powers were exerting upon the enemy—which would have been an admission of loss of command at sea—but in developing an effective offensive against the submarine.

Raw materials, indeed, cast their shadow over the whole war; the need for them affected strategy on land as well as at sea. Thus, even a temporary overrunning of Upper Silesia by the Allies was, in Falkenhayn's eyes, inadmissible, as 'it would have robbed Germany of the rich resources of Silesia, and consequently would have made it impossible for her to continue the war beyond a limited time.' 'The loss of the frontier territories would have rendered the continuation of the war impossible after a comparatively short time.' [1] Italy's entry into the war added inconveniences, as the Italian ports, so long as a state of hostilities was not declared between her and Germany, were a channel for supply. 'Our communications with the outer world through Italy, which provided us with extremely important raw materials, could not be dispensed with except under the most compelling necessity.' [2] Rumania, until she joined the Allies, was another source. Could the Central Powers have held out if neither food nor oil had been supplied by Rumania in 1916?

With what anxiety the German General Staff looked upon the situation that was growing as a result of the blockade is evident. Both Ludendorff and Falkenhayn lay emphasis upon the difficulty of maintaining the moral, both of the fighting services and the people, under the stress of privations. The makeshifts employed in munitions bear witness to the difficulties in shortage of materials. In his memorandum of Christmas 1915,

[1] *General Headquarters*, pp. 19, 41. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Falkenhayn was already predicting the possibility of ocpllase. 'The power of our allies to hold out is restricted, while our own is not unlimited. It is possible that next winter or—if the Rumanian deliveries continue —the winter after the next will bring food crises, and the social and political crises that always follow them, among the members of our alliance if there has been no decision by then.' [1] How true this was to prove we know. What is remarkable is that resistance was prolonged actually for a year longer than this estimate had foretold.

While the Central Powers were thus cut off from the outer oceans by the navies of the Entente, and the exiguous channels of supply through neutral ports were constricted by diplomatic and commercial measures, Russia was suffering even more acute difficulties at the hands of Germany. Except as a food producing and exporting country, Russia was not self-supporting in war. Her munition supply was insufficient, her means of increasing it were undeveloped. Her great retreat in 1915 was largely due to shortage of munitions, and the German command of the Baltic and the Turkish hold on the Dardanelles prevented any rapid means of replenishing them. The Vladivostok route was safe, but long; and both the port and railway were congested. Political difficulties hampered the transport across Scandinavia. Two Arctic channels existed, but of these Archangel is covered by ice for over half the year, and Kola, the port of the Murman railway, was, like the railway, as yet undeveloped. Thus sea-power, though it could carry goods to Vladivostok and Archangel, had then done all that was possible; the only alternative

[1] *General Headquarters*, p. 211.

lay in the opening of either the Baltic or the Dardanelles, and neither of these was a purely naval operation.

The blockade of Germany is usually spoken of as relating to the sea. In truth, as we have said earlier, there was no sea blockade in the technical sense of the term, and the isolation of Germany was not only by sea. The armies on land frontiers were performing a similar service. The collapse of Russia, which burst the barriers in the East, broke this blockade, and then the supplies drawn from the Ukraine preserved Austria and relieved Germany. If the Western barrier could also have been broken, whatever might have happened to the armies, a vast territory would have fallen into German hands on which they could have lived and continued to hold out and defy the oceanic blockade. But it would have done still more ; it would have aided to a high degree the German offensive at sea. Difficult as the problem proved to defend trade against the submarines operating from Flanders or the Bight, it would have been far more difficult if the northern ports of France had fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Thus a German military victory would have reacted offensively and defensively on the situation at sea. With Lithuania, Courland, the Ukraine, and another large region in France in their hands ; with bases on the Channel coast from which submarines could operate—bases whose approaches would be more difficult to mine and to observe than those in the Narrow or North Seas —Germany might well have high hopes of ending the war successfully. When, then, the great attack of March 1918 developed, the replacement of the Entente troops lost was a crucial matter. The Franco-British army, initially inferior to the enemy, had suffered

severely. Italy, not yet recovered from Caporetto, could lend small help, and the only available troops lay in England, America, and the Near East.

For the Central Powers, no less than for the Entente, the occasion demanded the acceptance of the highest risks to prevent the arrival of reinforcements and the replacement of lost guns. The first troops that could go were the quarter million and more in England, and these were dispatched with the utmost speed. Nothing yet has appeared to explain why the enemy made no attempt to cut the line of communication in the Channel. A difficult, most hazardous venture, indeed; one from which those who took part might not expect to return. But the results of a successful operation would have been so far-reaching that the loss of the whole navy of Germany would have been well incurred in procuring it. The ships were still in good sea-going condition, and the naval mutiny of the preceding autumn had not, it would appear, vitally affected the moral of the fleet. The hesitation to incur risks at sea, which prevented her from attempting to influence the course of events in August 1914, once more appeared at a second and even more critical and decisive moment. What may be the reasons for this attitude in so military-minded a nation cannot be said. Admiral Tirpitz, writing on January 14, 1915, attributed the inactivity of the fleet to the mentality of the admirals. 'All their thoughts, instead of being fixed on that (viz. beating England), are centred on technique, which leaves much to be desired in every direction and hinders them from accomplishing anything. . . . The fleet is there, but a Tegetthof is lacking.' Excellent material, as we know, was in the hands of well-trained officers and men; but

somewhere in the highest regions a spirit of distrust appeared to reign. The fleet, built as a 'sally fleet,' did not perform its mission of sallying at the moments when its services were most needed, and a finely prepared weapon rusted in the hands of men who seem to have made their calculations in the negative terms of what would happen if they were beaten, rather than in the positive terms of what injury it could inflict upon the fighting forces, both naval and military, of the enemy.

CONSIDERATIONS OF THE WAR AT SEA

WHEN Germany made her bid for world-hegemony she was faced with a choice concerning the order of her conquest. Should she first conquer the land or sea? Even in her most sanguine dreams she could not expect to be able to conquer both at the same time, though it is true that Bernhardi appeared to think that her sea and land opponents could be beaten simultaneously. The decision was of the highest importance. The direction of her pre-war foreign policy, her military and naval preparations, her budget and her colonial policy must all accord with her intentions; her eventual success would depend upon the correctness of the decision she made.

Some guidance in her choice was to be found in history. What had been the experience of would-be world conquerors? In the days of Elizabeth, when Spain was faced with a similar problem, the Spaniards realised that the sea Power stood in the way. Holland, the buttress against which Philip's efforts were directed, could only be reached, in the words of the Spanish saying of the day, through England. The sea must, in fact, first be conquered. But Medina Sidonia did not succeed in his attempt to obtain command of the water-route to the Netherlands, and Spain failed.

Both Louis XIV and Napoleon made their attempts

to conquer the world by continental warfare, hoping later to subdue the sea. They also failed, great as their victories had been on land. The failure in each case was largely due to exhaustion and distress caused by the cutting off of trade. Although Louis XIV made brilliant campaigns, his country was ruined by the expense, for he had no commerce to support the State and the armies. Napoleon in his turn overran Europe, but France still did not obtain economic freedom. The British navy had been thrown into one scale of the balance of power, with the result that continental Europe could not freely use the ocean highways, and commerce, the life-blood of nations, could not flow and feed its members.

Napoleon's efforts to cripple Britain, in answer to her war upon France, consisted in an attempt to place restrictions upon British commerce by exclusion from the Continent. The effect of his measures was to produce discontent among his unwilling vassals. The peace that France needed, the peace essential to her if she should be able to build up a great war fleet capable of consummating at sea the victories on land, was denied; and, by a paradox, this was partly due to the measures taken by Napoleon to destroy Britain by Decrees. Armies were still needed to enforce those Decrees on the Continent, and to hold down invaded regions, and to maintain a power based upon military conquest. Money was needed to pay those armies, and money could not be had except by trade. But trade was rendered impossible by the Orders in Council, executed by the British navy, which were drawn up in answer to the French Decrees.

Thus sea-power had played its part in the grand strategy of the Napoleonic struggle. It played it more

directly in the major strategy. Armies were moved freely by sea all over the world. They went to the Continent, India, Egypt, Sicily, the Cape, the West Indies, America, Java. Not only did they conquer the outer possessions of the enemy, they influenced the war in the heart of Europe. 'If anyone,' said Wellington in 1813, 'wishes to know the history of this war,[1] I will tell him it is our maritime superiority gives me the power of maintaining my army while the enemy is unable to do so.'

While the feverish race to construct a German fleet was in progress there were some who speculated as to whether Germany would accept and defy these portents, or whether, warned by results, she would endeavour first to conquer the sea. It was possible that, guided by the examples of the eventual fates of the schemes of Louis XIV and Napoleon, Wilhelm II would proceed upon other lines, and devote his whole efforts to the preliminary conquest of the sea. For this he would have required peace upon the Continent, understandings that would render his military situation secure, reductions in the cost of his army to the advantage of his fleet; and at the same time he must exhibit a constant friendship towards Great Britain, make denials of hostile intention, and avoid provocation in order to disarm her anxiety. The Emperor was known to be a student of sea-policy, and fully to understand the influence the British fleet had exercised in the bringing about the results of the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and such a course of action, in the opinion of those who were acquainted with him, was far from impossible.

[1] The Peninsular War.

Nevertheless Wilhelm II followed the old path that had led to the eventual downfall of his predecessors in ambition. The downfall in each case was long in coming, for sea pressure can only act slowly. Whether like Louis XV in 1744 he believed that complete victory on the Continent was so certain, and would be so swift, that sea-power could exercise no influence in the brief time available; or that he had disarmed Great Britain's navy by the agreements arrived at concerning sea-war; or that a decadent and selfish Britain, with rebellious colonies and dependencies, would not venture—if indeed she should wish—to intervene, future generations alone will know. Whatever the foundations of his belief, the fact remains that he challenged what some hold to be a precedent; like his forerunners he came very near achieving success; but like them he failed in the end, and sea-power in its alliance with land-power was an instrumental factor in bringing about that failure.

While German land-power in the end failed to bring about the desired victory without sea-power to sustain it, sea-power would have been impotent to defend the liberties of Europe unsustained by land-power. Nothing is clearer than the interdependence of the two, nothing more misleading or objectionable than the attribution of success to one or the other separately. A statesman of 1749—who, though we should be far from accepting him as an authority on the conduct of war, was a shrewd manager—remarked that 'naval force though carried never so high unsupported with even the appearance of a force on the Continent will be little use. . . . France will outdo us at sea when they have nothing to fear on land. . . . I have always maintained that our marine should protect our alliances on the Continent;

and they, by diverting the expense of France, enable us to maintain our superiority at sea.'

To-day, the armies on the Continent played a similar part both before and during the war. Before the war Germany was limited in her power of spending on the navy by her preoccupations on land—preoccupations self-imposed as a result of her aggressive policy since 1864. When war began, the success of the Allies hinged upon staving off the swift military defeat designed for them, until slow-acting sea-power could begin to bring the fullness of its influence into play.

The statements of German publicists leave us in no doubt as to what would have been the sequel if the Central Powers should have succeeded in their carefully calculated scheme of conquest. The steps from the domination of Europe to the domination of the world lie clear for all men to see. The annexation of Belgium, the northern French coast to the Somme, and the Brest peninsula would have placed Germany in a position to threaten Great Britain from several points with her armies, and to operate against British trade with her fleet from well-placed defended bases. The capture of the French colonies, upon which she had set her heart, would have provided her with the bases necessary for supplementing the attack upon trade in the oceans. From Dakar, Duala, Martinique, Cayenne, Dar-es-Salam, Diego Suarez, Rabaul, Saigon, and Tsingtau, cruisers, surface or submarine, would have been able to act upon every important trade route; and a port on the Mediterranean coast of Africa could then have been obtained without the possibility of any effective protest from a weakened Europe. The destruction of the French and Russian military powers would have permitted a great reduction

of the German army, and, with the money so saved, together with the indemnities upon a scale of which the example of Rumania affords us some measure, she would have been able to build up and maintain a navy equal at least to that of Great Britain. War could then only have been deferred so long as it suited the rulers and people of Germany.

Altruistic, therefore, though our entry into the war on account of the violation of Belgium's neutrality undoubtedly was, it was none the less an act of demonstrable self-interest. It was upon precisely similar reasoning as to French ambitions in the eighteenth century that we maintained the Balance of Power, as the debates in Parliament of the time show.[1] Britain could not afford idly to look on while a great naval and military Power was crushing its military rivals, since the inevitable sequel would be a challenge to our naval power, the loss of our trade, our colonies and our liberty. All of these would follow from a defeat of our allies in Europe. France in 1914 was, as Mr. Sandys described the House of Austria in 1741, the *Ucalegon* of Great Britain. Queen Elizabeth said that 'whensoever the last day of the Kingdom of France cometh, it will undoubtedly be the eve of the destruction of England.'[2] The same was true in 1914.

In what manner, then, has the navy been used to avert this catastrophe? The duties of the navy as a whole we know are numerous. It has to carry the troops of ourselves and our allies across the waters separating their own territories from those of the enemy; to defend our own territories; to attack the trade of

[1] Cf. *English Strategy in the War of the Austrian Succession.*

[2] *English Voyages of the Sixteenth Century*, by Sir W. Raleigh, p. 70.

the enemy; and protect that of the Allies; to co-operate tactically, where possible, with the armies and to prevent the enemy from affording a similar assistance to his own troops; the whole of which is summed up in the term 'defence of communications.' Where so many duties of such a diverse nature are awaiting performance, there exists a risk of dissemination of strength unless there be some clear main governing idea as to the principal object upon which attention must be concentrated at the outset, and at each particular stage; that is to say, we need a clear vision of the functions of the navy.

The functions of the navy are not concerned solely with sea-war, for the navy is one, and only one, part of the national forces in the employment of the country in war. The duties the navy has to perform must therefore be related to the whole forces of the Crown, and to attempt to define them as though they were special to the navy alone would lead to a circumscribed view fatal to a full appreciation of the subject.

Relations between Naval and Military Action

When nations go to war, peace is the object. A lasting peace—and no other is worth calling by the name—is only brought about by a victory so complete and terms so moderate and just that there is no chance of a resuscitation of the quarrel. Such a victory is obtained in its most decisive form when the control of the whole of the national life has fallen into the hands of the victors. When the sources of production, the means of distribution, the power to conduct commerce externally, or freely to buy and sell internally, are

controlled by an irresistible enemy, national life ceases, and a nation has the choice only of surrender or slavery. Surrender can then be made unconditional.

Such a complete subjugation can only be brought about, in the case of a determined nation, capable of self-support, by occupation of its territory. On the other hand, a country which does not possess within itself the means of self-support, and at the same time can be isolated and rendered incapable of receiving supplies, can be forced to surrender without a soldier's foot touching its shores. Surrounded either on land or sea, it must succumb unless it can overcome the armies or navies that encompass it, or both.

It is clear that the powers of resistance to subjugation by investment vary according to the dependence of the country upon external supplies and its geographical position. While Great Britain, if cut off from the outer world, must make peace in a time measurable in months, aboriginal Australia of 100 years ago might have been blockaded by sea for centuries without its inhabitants being aware that anything was happening. Again, a continental Power may be cut off from the sea, but be able to obtain relief from neutrals over its land frontiers ; but if blocked on its land frontiers by enemies' armies, and on its sea frontiers by enemies' fleets, it must break through either one or the other if it is to be able to continue to exist.

The complete reduction of a great continental country by investment is, however, a long and uncertain task. It has never hitherto been accomplished. The whole edifice of a combined naval and military blockade may crumble if one of the military partners succumbs and opens a door on that front, thus providing supplies

and a channel for them. The total defeat of one of a body of allies such as the Entente in the late war is not improbably the prelude to the defeat of the remainder. The defection of Russia and the resulting disaster at Caporetto nearly brought about such a situation; the sea operations could not in such circumstances have brought about a favourable decision.

The final word in victory is spoken when the enemy's military forces are wholly defeated, or in such a position that defeat is inevitable. Defeat can be followed, if surrender do not precede it, by occupation of the enemy's country. Such a defeat can be brought about by an army only. The army overcomes the resistance of, destroys or threatens to destroy the army of, the enemy, and gathers the fruit of the victory in the pressure it can apply to the national life thus laid open to it unprotected. A navy cannot do this. It can aid, but cannot by itself effect this object against a self-supporting country. The greatest national effort should always be directed to one end, and that the decisive one. Concentration of effort, the secret of success in every art, by none brought to such perfection as by Napoleon, is the prime requisite in war. If then the end to be achieved is decisive victory on land, the first function of the naval forces should be to ensure that the armies can be in the right place at the right time, complete in their numbers and their supplies.

If one looks at the late war in this light, in what outstanding particular did the possession of sea-command affect the course of the war, and play a part in defeating the schemes of the enemy and in bringing about his eventual downfall?

Victory for Germany, the victory upon which she

counted, was dependent upon the rapid conquest of France. No less than two-thirds of the German strength was to be concentrated in the West, France was to be overwhelmed, Russia was to be dealt with afterwards. *Time* was the essence of the problem.[1] If the British expeditionary force should not have arrived in time, the battle of Mons, beginning on August 23, would have resulted worse for the Entente; if it had not been present on September 9 at the Marne, Manoury's position would have been critical, and that great battle might have had a different ending.

No help which it would have lain in our power to give could have saved France if the German plan had succeeded as the Great General Staff were confident that it would succeed. British intervention later would, in all probability, have been fruitless. By itself, the command of the sea could not have purchased victory when France was crushed; and whether a blockade would have been practicable—a blockade of sufficient stringency to produce any appreciable result—is more than doubtful; while at the same time, the commanding naval positions at the disposal of the German navy in the Channel from Brest to Dunkirk would have allowed a war against British commerce to be conducted in the vital areas, the Channel Soundings and the Channel, in co-ordination with operations in the North Sea. A blockade of Brest would have been a far more difficult

[1] 'The Imperial Government had been obliged to take this step (*i.e.* send her troops through Belgium), for they had to advance through France by the quickest and easiest way, so as to be enabled to *get well ahead* with their operations and endeavour to strike some decisive blow *as soon as possible*. . . . It was a matter of life and death for them, as if they had gone by the more southern route they could not have hoped . . . to have got through without formidable opposition entailing great loss of *time*, which would have meant *time* gained by the Russians . . .' (Herr von Jagow to Sir E. Goschen).

matter than a blocking of the Straits of Dover; and even that was never completely fulfilled. For every submarine at sea working from the bases, from Ostend and Zeebrugge, half a dozen could have been kept out if working from Brest; and the facts that the supports of heavier craft might have been able to use the same base, that the British base of operations would have been at distant Plymouth instead of contiguous Dunkirk, that the water is unfavourable for mining, and that deflection of cruiser strength would have been necessary to mask such larger craft as the enemy might use as supports, give an idea of how serious a matter for British trade a defeat of the French army would have been.

Thus, outstanding above all other needs, imperative and insistent, was the military defence of France. If that failed, the whole naval and military strength of the British Empire would be unable to retrieve the situation. The first measure, therefore, which called for the exercise of British naval force was that of securing the passage of the army to the Continent. Speed, as the dates show, was essential. Upon speed of advance depended the successful resistance; and upon speed, again, depended the power of the enemy to interfere with the arrival of the British reinforcements; for if he could have reached and held the French Channel ports the whole problem of safe passage and disembarkation would have been confounded. Thus by its own rapid mobilisation and arrival the army contributed to the safety of its sea passage. Time, a concomitant of speed, was thus of no less importance to the Allies than to the enemy.

Why the enemy made no attempt to interfere with the passage of the army, upon whose presence in France great issues were eventually to depend, is one of the

questions for which we must await an answer.[1] That he was ignorant of its sailing and unable to predict its ports of disembarkation would seem improbable. If he knew these things, the inference is either that he did not think his plans could be affected by the presence of the British Army—he may, indeed, have welcomed the opportunity of destroying it and so leaving England defenceless on land—or that he felt that any attack upon the transports or attempt to block, bombard, or otherwise damage the ports of departure or arrival, was impracticable. The risks attending such an attempt are undeniable ; but at a moment when everything depended upon a rapid military success, no risks at sea were too great to be undertaken.

The maintenance of the communications of the British Expeditionary Force in order that the army might arrive in time to prevent a disaster in France was thus a first function of the navy. That the communications were not attacked does not alter the importance of the duty.

The same duty was shortly to be extended. Not only were there the military communications across the Channel to safeguard, but also those from the East Indies, from Australia and from Canada ; for the security of which arrangements had to be made for sailing the transports in convoys, escorted by cruisers.

Not less important was the safeguarding of the passage of the French colonial troops, a duty which fell to the French navy and formed its primary and principal

[1] It was highly probable that the enemy would endeavour to interfere with this movement, and in the early days of the war *it would not have been a difficult matter for him to cause us some loss* ' (Lord Jellicoe in *The Grand Fleet, 1914-16*, p. 22).

function. How great a part these troops played in the war in France and Flanders is well known. To some extent it can be measured by their casualties. If the communications between France and her colonial possessions had not been protected by her navy, these essential reinforcements to her army would not have reached the battlefields. There would seem, therefore, to be some ground for a common belief that the intended destination of the High Sea Fleet, in the case of war into which Great Britain did not enter, was the Mediterranean. If so, Great Britain's intervention altered the whole situation. Her main fleet then blocked the way, and so covered the passage of the first troops from Algeria and subsequent reinforcements from all parts.

This view that a primary duty of the navy is to assist the armies has the sanction of the past. Although in the particular instance of this war, owing to the rapidity with which events move under modern conditions of staff organisation and transport, the need was one of great immediacy, a study of instructions to admirals in the past shows that whenever the passage of troops by sea was in contemplation their movements formed a first charge upon the navy.[1] Whether the troops were British, allied or enemy, the distribution of squadrons, and the duties assigned to the commanders, related to the chain of military communications created by their passage across the sea. Nor is this to be described as imposing a defensive function upon the fleet, as taking it away from offensive operations against its true objective, the sea forces of the enemy. Tactically, the forces employed upon escort are acting defensively. Strategically,

[1] The examples of this are so numerous—since they occur in every campaign of every war—that it would be impossible to quote them.

the navy is playing its part in the great offensive operation of invading the enemy's country. The enemy's fleet, if it choose to remain in harbour, cannot in any case be attacked, and neither taunts nor trailing a coat across the mouths of its harbours will force it to sea. But when armies are crossing the water the fleet is offered the best of all reasons to put out—the defence of its own country ; or, looking at it otherwise, the support of its national army ; it is offered a most vital objective —the enemy's army—at which to strike ; and an opportunity—in the particular geographical position of this war—of bringing on an action with the main fleet of the enemy in the area most favourable to itself —the southern part of the North Sea.

Thus the maintenance of sea-communications is essentially offensive in relation to the military operations. It is also offensive in another sense. It has been remarked that a brave and enduring people is brought to a peace only by the actuality of privations and subjection caused by the occupation of its territory. A less determined, or a more cunning one, may submit when military defeat appears inevitable. If the main dispositions for the defence of sea communications are correct, and if convoy, cruising and cover are furnished in proper measure and worked upon correct principles, the navy will have its direct share in bringing this pressure to bear. The control of the sea communications of the enemy means the control of his powers of buying and selling, of procuring new goods, whether in the form of raw materials or finished articles that his own country cannot produce. No nation nowadays is wholly self-dependent for any extended time, for modern civilised life makes demands upon the whole

world to furnish its needs. These needs must in most cases be supplied across the highway of the sea. The power commanding the sea cuts off this traffic.

If trade could continue, in adequate quantity, credit would stand. The purchasing power of a country is a factor in the capacity to sustain a long war. Goods can be bought in the most favourably conditioned sources; men, otherwise employed in making such goods, are set free to fight. Conversely, if trade is cut off, credit falls, and the longer the war is continued the worse becomes the position and the more difficult the subsequent recovery. The power of having recourse to foreign industries in war material is of importance. Von der Goltz has pointed out that without this resource the French Government of national defence in the Franco-Prussian War would never have been able to constitute the formidable armies which astonished the whole world. 'The control of the sea'—continued this German General—'thus contributes indirectly to strengthen the State even if its fleets are not able to give direct aid to its army.' Germans of to-day, fulminating against America when neutral, for supplying arms to the Allies, have overlooked the opinion of this German soldier.

The strategical function of the navy, its place in grand strategy, thus becomes clear. The first thing to be assured is the security of passage of the troops employed in the vital military campaign. Next, the slower acting but severe pressure produced by cutting off trade. We should therefore expect to find that the preliminary dispositions of the fleet would be calculated to bring these offensive operations into play at the earliest moment.

The navy cannot however maintain the army unless at the same time it maintains the home country itself. The people must be fed, raw materials must enter the country to be transformed into weapons, credit must be maintained to enable us to pay for those materials. That is to say, imports and exports must continue. For this, sea communications generally must be secure. Any serious weakening in a defence of those communications weakens the power of the army to achieve victory; and thus it was not only of importance to protect the troops and their immediate requirements, but also to protect the raw materials from their source of origin until they reached, in their final form, their destinations in the theatre of war or in the bellies and on the backs of the people at home who were supporting the war by their labour.

Communications at sea are of an essentially different nature from those of armies on land. With the latter, the lines run back from each army and are particular to it. At sea they are common to both belligerents; the lines run through the same waters, the produce of a foreign country leaves the same port whether destined for Hamburg or London, and passes through the same terminal area. In consequence of this identity of routes, the navy, in defending its own lines of communications, automatically renders insecure those of the enemy. This is not to say that it has only to defend its own routes and those of the enemy will be closed; but that the general dispositions, the strategical distribution of the main bodies of the navy, which will provide for the defence of its national shipping, will also provide in great measure to cripple the shipping of the enemy.

To provide for the protection of our communications, cruisers were permanently stationed abroad in peace time, to be reinforced from the reserve fleets on the outbreak of the war. Such vessels are available for patrol, or, as in the case of the troop transports in the Indian Ocean and Atlantic, for convoy. The threat to which these convoys of troops were exposed was that of sporadic attack by the enemy cruisers already abroad, or of cruisers sent out from German home waters. In the latter case, cruiser squadrons might have been used; and, as escorts can only be arranged to meet the attack of such forces as are normally in the theatre through which the convoys pass, precaution must be taken to cover them against attack of superior force coming from other parts.

This cover was furnished by the principal fleet, which, stationed in the north, with a patrol line stretched across the North Sea and scouting vessels working to the south, was in a position to act if information were received from its outposts of the escape into the Atlantic of any considerable force, and to detach superior numbers to any point of danger. It was upon this principle that the Admiralty always acted in the past. The squadrons abroad were maintained at the lowest strength compatible with the duties of cruising and convoy on their stations; they could depend upon reinforcements from the home squadrons in the event of an enemy breaking out in force sufficient to threaten them.

Such a distribution provided for that element of offence against the enemy which can be conducted by sea-blockade. The same squadrons which kept up an observation and ensured cover—ensured it, that is to say, within the bounds of reasonable expectation—

could, since they were able to intercept or sight outgoing enemy ships, intercept home-coming vessels with equal effectiveness.

The word 'blockade' has been used above, but it does not properly describe the process by which supplies for Germany were cut off. Inaccurate use of terms is greatly to be deprecated, particularly in strategical matters in which accurate definition is essential to clear thought. Blockade implies the stationing of naval force in such a manner that vessels cannot enter enemy ports except under real risk of being intercepted: but there is no such thing as blockade of neutral ports, and neutral ports are the source of enemy supply. The measures taken in the war aimed at—and eventually succeeded in—restricting trade to neutral ports in addition, controlling in fact all sea-borne commerce; permitting innocent trade to pass with the least practicable hindrances, but holding up contraband whenever it could be found. More correctly we should describe the process as an extension of the doctrine of contraband.

Contraband itself however is hardly less a misnomer. Its original meaning was clear; it restricted the term to articles of direct military use only. Attempts were made to divide articles into the categories of absolute, conditional and non-contraband; but as the war progressed and developed into a struggle between the whole nations, and as every kind of raw material assisted the enemy to hold out, the distinctions proved impossible and more articles were added constantly. The German Government took charge of the food supply; the food fed both army and people, and it was impossible to discriminate between one or the other. The point is reached, in fact, that everything which assists the enemy

to hold out against the siege of his country is of direct military use to him. The whole enemy's trade is thus contraband; and not only does this apply to the trade direct to his ports, but to the trade which, by virtue of the extended system of modern communications—roads, rails and canals—can reach him from other countries. The 'rationing' system, based upon the assumption that any abnormal increase of trade to a neutral that has easy communications with the enemy is suspect, as being in reality for export to the enemy is an extension of the idea of contraband and not of blockade.

The sea effort against Germany, the direct contribution, individual to the sea, towards bringing pressure upon her national life, although it began with what might be called a form of blockade, was eventually developed into a great system of the control of all trade at sea, for which process some new name is required.

The German Attack upon Trade

What the German plan of war at sea was, before the war, we do not know, but we have an indication in Prince Bulow's 'Imperial Germany' that it was to follow the lines of a *guerre-de-course*. British trade was to be attacked by numbers of commerce destroyers, while the British fleet was contained by the High Sea Fleet and threats of invasion—a plan of which we can find examples in earlier wars. Attrition of the British fleet by mining the approaches to the ports she intended to use as bases and submarine attack would form the prelude to engaging the British main fleet.

The disposition of German cruisers on foreign stations, and the small number of commerce destroyers

fitted out in the early part of the war, add to the other evidence of Germany's expectation that Great Britain would not fight. The war, Baron Beyens says in his 'Germany before the War,' broke out earlier than Tirpitz had foreseen. And indeed, it is not to be imagined that Germany, who prepares her plans so carefully, would have made such meagre preparations for attack upon British commerce if she had anticipated Britain taking part. As matters stood she had to make the best of her existing dispositions, and begin a commerce war without those bases abroad, the importance of which has been so much urged among others by German admirals.[1]

The German attack upon commerce, whether by surface ships or submarines, brought out no new principles of naval war. On the contrary, it confirmed with the greatest precision the principles of commerce defence employed in the old wars. Although in the earlier stages these principles were not followed, by the end of the war there were few to which we had not returned.

The first phase of commerce attack lasted for eight months, from August 1914 to April 11, 1915, when the last of the cruising ships then abroad found its way into Newport News. The attack cost us some 240,000 tons of shipping, of which the *Emden* and *Karlsruhe* accounted for about 143,000 between them, in approximately equal shares. Their success, compared with other ships, was due to the selection of the areas in which they worked; in making the selection they followed precedent.

[1] *Kreuz-Zeitung*, December 22, 1916, and *Alldeutscher Staats-Zeitung*, December 30, 1916.

In the wars of the past, certain definite measures have always been employed in the defence of trade, of which the principal was convoy. 'The result of the convoy system,' wrote Mahan, many years ago, 'warrants the inference that when properly systematised and applied, it will have more success as a defensive measure than hunting for individual marauders, a process which, even when most thoroughly planned, still resembles looking for a needle in a haystack.'

A second measure, worked in conjunction with the convoy system, was that of cruising, or patrol; a method dictated by the necessity of rendering focal points of trade dangerous for enemy commerce destroyers to work in for any great length of time. Important areas off landfalls, coastal routes, straits, points or areas of departure or arrival, in all of which shipping tended to converge, were the obvious places in which attack would be most fruitful. Thither commerce destroyers invariably went, and there also cruising squadrons, or single cruisers, were stationed to prevent the enemy from operating with security.

A third fundamental principle of commerce defence was to capture the enemy's bases of operation, whenever it was practicable—'the only support upon which commerce destroying can depend; with whose fall it must also fall.' This, in Mahan's opinion, is the proper offensive against privateer war, 'when one navy is overwhelmingly predominant as the British was in 1794, and the enemy confines himself to commerce destroying by crowds of small privateers, then the true military policy is to stamp out the nests where they swarm.' [1]

Finally, of principal measures, there was the arming

[1] *Influence of Sea Power on French Revolution and Empire*, ii. 217.

of merchant ships. Whether vessels sailed in convoy or as 'runners' they were invariably armed for ocean voyages; and this arming was made compulsory by Orders in Council of 1625 and 1676, an historic fact of which the Germans in their outcries against this 'wicked' measure appeared to have been ignorant; or, if aware of it, have arrogated to themselves the right to establish what is and what is not correct in sea-warfare.

Other measures of a less fundamental character were used in the past, such as routeing the ships, recognition signals, irregular sailings and changes of landfall. The diversionary effect of enemy threats to disembark troops also played a part, very frequently, in the defence of his own trade by occupying the attention of British squadrons.[1] But the four measures outlined earlier formed the keys of the system of commerce defence in the wars of the eighteenth century.

Of these measures neither convoy nor patrol was used in this first stage of commerce war, and but few merchant ships were armed, and those weakly; but expeditions against the colonies of the enemy in East and West Africa and the South Pacific were set in motion. The Colonial Governments were invited on August 6, 1914, to send expeditions against New Guinea and Samoa, while another was prepared in England for the Cameroons. None of these colonies contained developed naval bases, and it was not until Japan came into the war that the only completed German base

[1] A threat, for example, of an expeditionary force assembled at Brest or Cadiz would bring about a concentration of British squadrons opposite these ports. French trade from Rochefort, or Spanish from Corunna, would thus obtain a clear passage.

abroad, Tsingtau, was attacked. In capturing that port Japan performed a valuable service, although the potentalities of the base, in face of the strong fleet which Japan's intervention brought into play in the Far East, had dwindled. But so long as it should have remained in enemy hands there would have been a need to observe it, with consequent locking up of naval force which could more usefully be employed otherwise. With the great radius of action of which later submarines became capable, and the possibilities, shown by the cruises of the *Möwe*, *Wolf* and *Seeadler*, that supply ships might reach Eastern waters, Tsingtau might have become later the base of a submarine campaign most distressing to the trade in China and the East. Duala, in the Cameroons, was an undeveloped harbour. But if it could have been held even in its condition at the outbreak of war, it would have served to assist submarine warfare. The same may be said of Dar-es-Salam. It was fortunate that we were not faced with a series of well-defended ports like Martinique, Guadeloupe, Port François, Pondicherry and Mauritius as we were in the old wars, the capture of which was necessary to put an end to the war against trade in those outer seas.

The principal successes of the enemy cruisers were secured within comparatively small limits. The majority of those of the *Karlsruhe* were in an area about 300 miles square, some 300 miles out from Cape San Roque (Brazil), and of the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*—30,000 tons—in a rather larger area some 500 miles off the same cape. The *Emden* made her captures off the southern end of India, the route near Minikoi, and along the trade route between Ceylon and Cape Palmyra. Under the old

system of cruising, vessels would have been kept in such areas on patrol. The method followed in this war was to employ cruisers to search for the enemy according to information of, or in anticipation of, his movements. None of the above three ships was brought to book by this measure. The *Karlsruhe* sank as the result of an internal explosion when on her way to raid West Indian anchorages ; the *Kronprinz* reached Newport News and was interned in March 1915 ; and the fortuitous juxtaposition of a convoy of Australian transports, escorted by the *Sydney*, *Melbourne* and *Ibuki*, led to the destruction of the *Emden*. Von Spee's squadron, some of whose ships had made a few captures, ran into the arms of Admiral Sturdee at the Falkland Islands within 24 hours of the arrival of the British squadron in Port Stanley, without his having the trouble to look for them. The *Dresden*, the sole survivor, after evading detection in the intricate waters of the Tierra del Fuegan coast from the middle of December till the end of February, was discovered by the *Kent* and her consorts and sunk at Juan Fernandez.

Thus we cannot trace the initial clearing of the outer seas to the use of any methods analogous to those systematic measures employed for trade defence in past wars, nor to the measure of continual search. Luck and the lack on the part of the enemy of well-placed and provided bases were the principal reasons for the disappearance of the first commerce raiders.

The Submarine War against Commerce

The second stage of commerce war was that of the employment of the submarine, which began in October

1914 with the sinking of the *Elitra*. Armed with a small gun, able to lay unseen in wait, these vessels quickly showed their power of inflicting injury. Their power of submersion, and therefore of certain escape from superior force, conferred on them a strategic as well as tactical advantage over the surface vessel—that of capability to operate in the thronged waters of approach to the United Kingdom. No surface vessel of to-day could lie on and off the Land's End or Beachy Head for days on a stretch. The fast privateer of the past could do so to a limited extent, but her speed was always liable to be compromised by accident, and the losses of privateers at the hands of frigates were numerous.[1] The submarine, in the early stages of the war, possessed this advantage of practical certainty of escape.

The reply to the old privateers in the Channel lay in the convoy system and in the employment of a great flotilla, numbering at one time no fewer than 1500 craft of all types, used partly upon patrol, partly hunting in packs. A precisely similar set of measures was found necessary in this war. The armed patrol organisation, beginning on a comparatively small scale with the object of patrolling the approaches to certain important harbours, expanded its functions to the patrolling of all waters round the kingdom. Based upon convenient ports, the several flotillas were assigned areas in which to work, some patrolling, some laying nets. It was, however, very many months before any organised system governed their employment, or any co-ordination

[1] A very rough analysis shows that the proportion of submarines lost to commerce destroyed is not very different from that of privateers lost to commerce destroyed.

was arranged between the flotilla and the trade it had the duty of protecting. In one area a flotilla would work upon one system; a different system would be in vogue in both adjacent areas. Experience, and the inauguration of a branch of the Staff specially to deal with the submarine war, slowly developed the methods of protecting trade. Convoy was eventually introduced in the last year of the war, and patrols were more systematically used. A hunting flotilla of yachts had been employed early in the war, but until means had been found of locating the submarine when submerged—replacing the useless eye by the ear—and of attacking it with underwater charges, these were practically ineffective. A pack cannot hunt without scent.

Owing to the impossibility of locating and injuring the submarine the first measures of convoy and cruising were almost purely defensive. The only long distance weapon, the gun, constituted a threat; but when shot began to fall close, the submarine could always decline further combat and dive. The ram could be used if the submarine permitted or was caught napping, as she sometimes was. A hand-thrown bomb demanded an equal lack of vigilance on the part of the enemy. It is, however, idle to talk of an offensive against an enemy when the means of finding him, or, if found, of destroying him, are lacking.

In the old privateer war, the fast specially-built French luggers and chasse-marées possessed a similar power of evading capture. The slow brigs might sight them but could not catch them. The old officers frequently deplored the lack of fast light vessels capable of running the enemy down. 'It is like setting a cow to catch a hare,' remarked the Commander-in-Chief of

the Channel Squadron on one occasion.[1] Guile was therefore brought into play. Small frigates, brigs, even large frigates disguised themselves, painting out their gun ports, setting their sails indifferently, hauling their yards as though shorthanded; and in this condition would lumber down the channel. The bait brought the privateer within reach, gun ports were opened, the ensign hoisted, and the intending boarder received a broadside.[2]

A similar method was developed shortly after the surface attacks by submarine began, but only upon a small scale and therefore unsystematised. The *Baralong* was among the first of this reincarnation of this trap of which the first example goes back to the seventeenth century. In spite of the obvious possibilities of this simple means of dealing with the submarine, it was not developed upon any comprehensive scale for some time, and thus the full fruits of surprise were not gathered—a feature the importance of which is familiar to all students of war.

The arming of merchant ships, instituted on a strictly limited scale before the war for the defence of food-carrying vessels against armed merchant cruisers of the enemy, was begun. It was clear that a submarine with a gun could be matched by a merchant vessel similarly armed; and, whereas the merchant vessel could afford to be hit many times, the submarine could run no risks. If the submarine's gun-attack could be defeated, at least half her powers of offence were removed. Fully fifty

[1] *Cf.* also Lord Keith to Lord Barham, October 1, 1805: '. . . The seas will swarm with privateers . . . we shall want some fast brig-sloops, for *the gun brigs cannot overtake them*, as they are mostly luggers or cutters' (*Barham Papers*, iii. 155).

[2] Cf. *French Corsairs*.

per cent. of the losses early in 1915 were due to the gun. As guns became available they were fitted; but the demands upon the artillery resources of the country were heavy, and the arming of the merchants took time. The Expeditionary Force needed every gun it could get, and, the strategical needs in the spring of 1915 being centred upon holding the enemy in France, guns properly went to the army. But many were available which were not adapted to the shore service, and anti-torpedo armaments of the older ships could be surrendered, and old guns useless for other purposes could be used.

The first phase of the employment of the submarine against commerce lasted from October 1914 to February 1915. During this time the German authorities professed to act with restraint and to direct their attacks upon armed vessels. But the profession was superficial; and such incidents as the attack upon the *Amiral Ganteaume*, with 2500 refugees on board, took place. The losses, however, were not large at this period.

In February 1915 the war was made more intensive; the sinkings in consequence increased rapidly. In January the losses were less than a dozen, by March they had grown to 25, by May to 67, and they reached their height in August with a figure of over 100. Matters were now getting serious. During these months, however, the measures of arming and disguising were steadily improving and making surface attack more difficult and more risky. The losses were checked and a steady decrease in them took place. The enemy had now found that unless he could produce greater results the campaign must fail in its object. More drastic measures must be taken if Great Britain was to receive the *coup-de-grâce* intended for her. Nothing less than

this was worth while, for the campaign was raising protests from America, and if it continued without producing vital results, might only have the effect of alienating neutrals and increasing German difficulties. Faced with this problem, with a Russia unsubdued and in process of rearmament after her losses, Germany came to the resolution to use the torpedo 'ruthlessly' and sink all ships without warning.

The gravity of the decision was fully appreciated by the enemy. Neutrals had already suffered much from mines, arbitrary treatment as to routes, attack and sinking by gunfire. Would they stand more? By clamour he had succeeded early in the war in preventing British ships from using the perfectly correct and legitimate ruse of false colours—a ruse the justification of which should have needed no defence. No danger to a neutral could occur if the correct measure of visit and search were used by the commerce destroyer. Submerged, the submarine could not distinguish enemy from neutral, and neutrals were bound to suffer. Undeterred by the risks of forcing them to take action, exemplified in the past by the armed coalitions which arose against Great Britain when her conduct at sea was considered unduly arbitrary, Germany took the plunge.

It was not taken lightly, nor without a serious calculation of the results by the German Staff. The effect of the submarine war was being carefully observed during 1915, and toward the end of the year the Staff prepared a memorandum. The conclusions reached in the paper were that a six months' intensified campaign would reduce Great Britain to sue for peace on account of a shortage of necessary supplies. The paper was thoroughly discussed. It was put into the hands of

ten technical experts, who were directed to answer three questions: 'What effect will the unrestricted submarine war have upon Great Britain?' 'What will be the consequences of such a war upon the relations between Germany, the United States and other neutrals?' 'Is the internal situation of Germany such as to necessitate and justify the employment of such an extreme form of war?' The close resemblance between these questions and those put in 1761 concerning opening hostilities with Spain deserves notice. 'Before adopting the drastic course for which Pitt was on fire and well prepared they [Bute's supporters] argued that there were first three questions to be settled: was such a course justified? was it within our naval and military strength? and lastly, was it expedient?' [1]

To the first of these questions the unanimous reply was that Britain could be reduced in six months. On the second problem, opinions were divided; but none advised withholding from this measure for fear of war with the United States. As to the third, all agreed that the internal situation rendered necessary, and justified, the use of the submarine in this manner.

Thus the decision was made upon well-weighed considerations. Trusting to military strength, omitting all other factors, Germany for a second time forced a possible neutral into the war on the twin pleas of necessity and certainty of success. Necessity had been her excuse for the invasion of Belgium; she believed that Britain's intervention, realised as being possible, could not prevent a German victory. Necessity again demanded and justified a ruthless submarine war; this time she believed that America's intervention could not prevent

[1] *England in the Seven Years War*, ii. 198.

victory. The spirit in each case was the same as that which precipitated the war itself. Was it not indeed 'necessity' that dictated a war in 1914? The French Three Years' Service Act was coming into force; the Russian strategic railways would be completed before long; the internal condition of Germany, with the spread of socialism alarming the governing classes, were reasons which made striking as soon as possible 'necessary.'

In 1915, the possibility of American intervention and its effects were weighed, as at the earlier time the same test had been applied to British intervention. The grievous error made in the case of Britain served in no way as a warning in the case of America. The same conclusions were arrived at. But the spirit of the problematical enemy, his powers and his resources, were in each case wholly miscalculated. The German, priding himself as the best psychologist in the world, proved to be the worst; and thinking himself infallible in estimating both the temper and productive capacity of every country, showed himself utterly wrong.

Wrong as he was about the United States, he was however less wrong in his estimation of what some other neutrals might do. The abstention of some other Powers, in face of deliberate wrongs to their mercantile marines, must be regarded as a triumph of German propaganda work. That weak Powers, with German armies on their frontiers, should be cautious is easy to understand. But that others, separated by sea and secure therefore from invasion, would accept such treatment as they did seemed almost incomprehensible. The victory of Germany, once America entered the war, became well-nigh impossible from that moment—some said impossible, but nothing is impossible in war. It

would be hard to find a parallel to the situation of a nation, the inheritor of a great tradition and still among the recognised Powers of Europe, secure from any possible attack of Germany or her Allies, yet taking no action to defend her own commerce against a form of attack which ran counter to every international agreement. Some of us, before the war, disbelieved in the efficacy of the submarine as a commerce destroyer, reasoning that it was impossible that any neutral would tamely submit to the deliberate sinking of her merchant fleet by torpedoes without warning. It was argued that as a gun-armed submarine would necessarily be lightly armed, merchant ships could readily be defended, as they were in the past, by armament. If the enemy employed the torpedo he denied himself the power of discrimination between neutral and hostile vessels and must before long cause such loss of life and property to neutrals that he would be obliged either to abandon this form of attack or accept additional enemies. This anticipation was not fulfilled, and like the German psychologists, those of the Allies who held the view were wrong.

Before the submarine campaign began the enemy had come into possession of two valuable bases of operations—Zeebrugge and Ostend. These ports, ready for use, except that they were undefended, had fallen undamaged into their hands. As it is impossible that the use of those ports against British trade on the east coast, and in particular in the vital approaches to the Thames, was not foreseen, the reason why no attempt was made to render them unserviceable before they were evacuated will be of interest to the future historian. Naval interests could only demand the

destruction of the ports in conformity with the immutable axiom that, given a base, commerce destroyers will act from it and that the difficulties of dealing with them will be increased. From a military point of view the ports would be of service for supply of the British army if they should be retaken by us and a further advance made; but this very usefulness must have precluded any chance that a retreating German army would leave assets of such value behind him. It is unusual for an army in retreat to leave bridges in its rear in case they shall be needed for a subsequent offensive return: Ostend and Zeebrugge were bridgeheads in the maritime line of communication. There remains the political point of view. Our Belgian ally may have viewed with the strongest distaste a measure so seriously affecting the commerce of Belgium. These two commercial ports, constructed at great expense, would return to her after the war. Was it desirable, it may have been asked, even if some military disadvantage might accrue, that public works of such importance should be destroyed? If such reasons were put forward the answer lies in the results. The losses of tonnage, the great deflection of naval forces, and the subsequent effect upon the military campaign furnish the reply. The mistake was not left unnoticed. Plans for blocking were suggested after the Germans had occupied the ports; but they were considered impracticable and were not carried out.

Under the influence of various conditions, the first submarine campaign dwindled. It had failed in its object, which was to bring about a decision: it had done great harm, but it had not broken the Allied sea-communications as it had been intended to do. The arming of merchant ships which promised to make gun-attack

difficult and dangerous, and the attitude of America towards the torpedo attack which formed the only alternative may have been the dominating influences. The German policy then appears to have been to lull her enemy and the great maritime neutral into security, secretly to build a great flotilla, and when all was ready, launch an attack on such a scale that, whether America objected or not, she could not intervene in time to save the Allies : a policy sound in conception if the calculations as to its results were correct. The submarine had already greatly increased in size, and consequently in endurance, and its gun-carrying capacity had made it formidable even against an armed vessel. Fortunately, the British occupation of all possible German bases abroad except those in East Africa restricted the powers of oceanic attack on any great scale ; and the East African bases, besides being difficult to supply, were threatened by the British military expedition, and finally lost by the autumn of 1916.

The military expeditions have been referred to in relation to their share in capturing the bases of the enemy. They had a further significance in the capture of the wireless stations. At Kamina in Togoland and Windhoek in S.W. Africa, at Tsingtau and in the Islands in the North Pacific there were wireless stations, which, in any attack upon trade, would be of importance to the enemy for communicating instructions to commerce destroyers.

The Second Stage of Surface War against Commerce

A recrudescence of cruiser warfare in the ocean took place in the winter of 1915–16. In December the *Möwe*,

a 4000-ton, 14-knot steamer, armed with four 6-inch and other guns concealed behind dropping bulkheads, and a torpedo armament, left Kiel, on a combined mine-laying and commerce-destroying cruise. Laying her first field, which shortly afterwards caused the loss of H.M.S. *King Edward VII*, to the westward of the Orkneys, and her second west of Rochelle, she ran down the trade routes past Finisterre, crossed the Atlantic and coaled from a captured British collier near the mouth of the Amazon. Thence the *Möwe* proceeded to the neighbourhood of St. Paul's Rocks, and finally returned to Germany without mishap, having sunk about 50,000 tons in the course of a two months' cruise.

The cruise had many points of interest. In the first place it demonstrated the possibility of passing into the ocean from the North Sea, and returning without being seen. The winter months with their long periods of darkness and foul weather were favourable to this evasion—in fact it would have been impossible to ensure preventing all escapes. The captures were effected mainly on the trade routes and not at focal points, only a small number being made in the previous hunting ground of the *Karlsruhe* and *Kronprinz Wilhelm* off the South American salient. Of her captures, one ship, the *Clan MacTavish*, engaged her, but was taken after a courageous attempt to defend herself with her weak armament.

These results were undoubtedly encouraging to the enemy. If one ship could do this, others could. In the following winter therefore the *Möwe* made a second cruise, leaving in December, proceeding outwards by a far northerly track in the darkness of midwinter. She operated on the cross Atlantic route, where among other

ships she took the *Yarrowdale* [1] with 100 motors and a cargo of steel for France on board, and the *San Theodore* with a coal cargo. The former was sent as a prize to Germany, which she reached in safety, the latter served as a collier. From mid-Atlantic she went, like her predecessors, to the offing of the South American salient, reaching as far south as within some 500 or 600 miles of Rio. She returned to Germany after nearly four months at sea, having taken and destroyed over 120,000 tons of Allied—principally British—shipping. At the same time the *Seeadler*, a barque-rigged ship with auxiliary engines capable of driving her about 12 knots, and an armament of two 4-inch guns, sailed from Kiel, and going to the north of the Orkneys escaped into the Atlantic, captured two ships off the Azores, and from thence went to the northward of Cape San Roque, about midway between that cape and the Cape Verde Islands, where in the course of seven weeks' cruising across the trade routes she took ten ships, principally sailing vessels. Proceeding south, she rounded the Horn, sailed up the west coast of South America as far as Callao and stretched into the Pacific, where her only captures were three American schooners in the neighbourhood of Christmas Island. In August 1917 she was wrecked on a coral reef. Her total captures amounted to about 26,000 tons of shipping.

A third and more formidable raider sailed during the same winter—the *Wolf*. She was a vessel of nearly 6000 tons, heavily armed with 6-inch and 4-inch guns and torpedo tubes; she carried a cargo of mines and a seaplane. Like the *Möwe* and *Seeadler* she made her

[1] Subsequently converted into a raiding ship, renamed *Leopard*, and sunk by the *Achilles* and *Dundee*.

escape by going well to the northward along the Norwegian coast before striking westward. Keeping well out in the Atlantic she made no captures, and her first operation was to lay minefields off the Cape of Good Hope, Colombo and Bombay. Capturing a prize, the *Turritella*, in mid-Indian Ocean, she detached her with a prize crew to lay mines off Aden. From the Indian Ocean, where a total of three captures had been made, she crossed to Australian waters, laid mines in the north of New Zealand, in Cook Strait, and off the S. E. Cape of Australia. The *Wolf* then made a passage under easy steam to Singapore, in the course of which she captured three vessels. A minefield was laid near Singapore, and the ship returned to the Indian Ocean, capturing a Japanese steamer, the *Hitachi Maru*, on September 26. She then returned towards Madagascar, took prize a Spanish steamer, the *Igotz Mendi*, rounded the Cape, and keeping well into the ocean returned to Germany in February 1918. Her prize ran ashore in thick weather off the Skaw and was lost. In this extensive cruise the *Wolf* destroyed over 107,000 tons of shipping, either by capture or minefields.

The use of an aeroplane for scouting, and of mines in distant parts of the ocean routes, were new developments in the *Wolf's* cruise. The *Möwe*, as we have seen, had laid minefields off the Scottish and French coasts. Like all other forms of activity, two measures are needed to combat the mine danger. First, taking steps to prevent the mines from being laid; second, to prevent the mines, if laid, from achieving their object. In the case of attack by gun-armed ships parallel measures consist, broadly speaking, for the former, in guarding the points of departure, the probable area of operations

and the objective by the use, respectively, of blockade, patrol and convoy ; for the latter, in arming the merchant ship, establishing routes, warnings, and observing caution in avoiding strangers. The minelayer needs the same treatment. In the first category, a blockade so effective as to prevent her from sailing at all would clearly be the best if it were practicable : but it is not. Patrol of possible areas of operation is less easy, as the areas to patrol are extensive and the minelayer, unlike the gun-armed raider, need remain only a few hours in the area of operations to carry out her designs effectively. Convoy affords no protection. In the second category, a device attached to the ship which will guard against the mines of the field in case the ship should pass through it ; pre-arranged routes kept clear by sweeping and led through waters too deep for mine-laying ; warnings when a minefield has been located ; and construction which will give the ship powers of floating if struck. There is nothing inherently difficult in taking these measures except the last, though a blockade so efficient that it can prevent the sailing of single ships has never been possible in the history of the navy ; but it can render it difficult and dangerous, as the sinking of two raiders by the northern patrol has shown. A great scope for the forces of the several Dominions is afforded by the work of convoy, patrolling and sweeping. Construction, however, is a slow process ; a merchant navy cannot be quickly rebuilt.

This second stage of surface warfare against commerce resulted in a loss of about 320,000 tons of shipping. Statisticians may be able to compute what this represented in money—in the value of the ships, their cargoes, the resultant losses in trade, the loss of time brought about

by the delays incident to a convoy system, the divergence from direct routes and the other factors which are connected with disturbance of sea-borne commerce. In considering the importance of this war we must not fall into the mistake of estimating its effect solely in tons of shipping lost.

The Convoy System

The convoy system, for protection against surface craft, had been put in operation, as we have seen, for the defence of the transports from Algeria, India, Canada, and Australia at the beginning of the war. It was re-introduced as the result of raider action, and, later on, was brought in for submarine warfare in the summer of 1917. On a small scale, escorts had been in use since the beginning of the war, but a regular system had not been developed for escorting large numbers of ships.

Convoy is based upon the principle that the escort is strong enough to deal with any attack that may reasonably be expected—attack, that is to say, of a sporadic nature. For defence against stronger forces than single ships, or small squadrons, it depends upon the efficacy of the cover afforded by the main fleet or fleets, or other measures taken to mask, confine, or intercept the principal naval forces of the enemy. In the Atlantic there was comparatively small risk of attack by other than single cruisers—comparatively small, not definitely. That such attack was not impossible was realised; but the diffidence shown by the enemy of risking any large forces far from his ports permitted the assumption that he would not depart from a cautious

reserve unless some great advantage was demonstrable. Atlantic Ocean escorts were therefore made capable of dealing with attacks by single *Möwes* or *Wolfs*. These oceanic convoys operated under cover of the Grand Fleet and the intelligence system, and security was added by the difficulty which any considerable squadron of ships of force would encounter in relation to fuel supply.

In the North Sea the problem was different. Whereas the Grand Fleet and its auxiliary cruisers were between the enemy and the Atlantic, in the North Sea they were not so; nor were there difficulties of fuel supply, for ships could leave German harbours, attack the crossing convoys, and return without need of refuelling. The Norwegian convoys had, in fact, to pursue a track on the flank of which lay the principal German base.

In such a case there must, in the nature of things, be an element of gambling. A regular cycle of progressive increases in escort and attacks may be expected to take place. The strength of the escort becomes known to the enemy, who from his flanking port sends out a superior force. If the stroke fails, by missing the convoy, the escort may mistakenly be supposed to have done its work, and its strength may remain unchanged. If it is successful, either the system is abandoned, or the route changed, or a stronger escort is sent. The attacker then tends to send out a force stronger than the reinforced escort, and the second blow may be more disastrous than the first. By successive increases the point, in fact, is eventually reached at which the escort instead of the convoy becomes the principal objective of the enemy. It was by such a series of progressions that De la Jonquière lost his squadron to Anson, and that five months later De l'Etanduère lost his larger

escort at the hands of Hawke's reinforced squadron. In the operations leading up to those actions the French were attempting to apply the convoy system, uncovered, in the face of potentially superior forces operating from the flanking position of the British Western Channel ports.

The escorts in the North Sea were arranged, in the first instance, to defend the convoys against submarines. The attacks at first had been made wholly by submarines, and the institution of the convoy system in the first place was the outcome of the losses sustained from those vessels. The cycle of progression began after some months. In October a convoy was attacked by two fast cruisers, the escort—two destroyers—was sunk, the convoy destroyed. Cruisers were then attached to the destroyer escort as 'supports'; but they did not keep touch with the convoys, and a second attack in December, conducted by a superior force of destroyers, overwhelmed a second convoy, sinking one of the escort; the second destroyer of the escort, badly damaged, escaped.

The next step was to add battleships to the escort in anticipation of attack by heavier vessels; and as the effect of this might well be that the enemy would send out a stronger force, as soon as he had obtained information of the normal strength of the escort, scouting vessels to guard against being surprised were next attached. The escort had thus grown, from a purely anti-submarine guard of two destroyers, to a squadron of battleships and cruisers, with screening destroyers for the battleships, and, as before, the anti-submarine escort of the convoy itself. It was now worth while for the enemy to make an attack upon the escort itself,

as soon as he should have assured himself of its maximum strength and the date of sailing.

The procedure was continued for some months, and the further stage of the progression occurred. In April 1918 a German battle squadron put to sea and proceeded to the Norwegian coast in the hopes of falling in with one of the weak battleship escorts and destroying it. Fortunately no convoy was arriving at that time: but the experience demonstrated that it was not possible to rely upon either intelligence or scouting off the German ports to give warning of the sailing of superior force. In consequence an alternative method of affording defence was adopted—that of so routeing the convoys that the British squadrons could operate on interior lines. By obliging the enemy to come so far out from his port that his interception would become nearly certain, and therefore an attempt to attack too highly dangerous to himself, the need for a strong escort would disappear. This was done, and the Scandinavian convoy was then to all intents and purposes conducted upon the same basis of cover by the Grand Fleet as the trade in the outer oceans. After April 1918 no further attacks were made upon these North Sea convoys.

The part which commerce defence plays was underestimated before this war by many people. This was partly due to the way in which naval history has been written. While the operations of the principal fleets in relation to each other and the battles between those main bodies have been fully described, we have been given by the old historians little of the great campaign in defence of trade which was invariably one of the great preoccupations of the navy. It is hard to trace in Burchett, Lediard, Beatson, Campbell, Brereton, or

James the course of these operations, the measures taken or the influence of trade defence upon the whole war. Scattered frigate actions, brushes with convoys, are described as separate unconnected events. In one history these fall under the general heading of 'minor operations.' Mahan, indeed, had drawn attention to the influence of the operations against trade in his admirable chapters on that subject; but he had not information for describing the methods used except in general terms. Hence, the whole matter had been looked upon rather as a side issue, and it is even possible now, after a four years' war, to find people speaking of the diversion of naval strength from its 'military duties' to those of escorting merchant ships and patrolling areas, and saying that a vigorous fleet action gives 'command of the sea,' even at a time when the submarine attack on trade has been endangering our very existence. It is to be hoped that this matter will be better understood in the future. A decisive fleet action is the best preliminary to security, but does not itself furnish it. We suffered many losses of trade in the years between Trafalgar and the peace.

Diversions

Diversions and feints played a very small part in this war, in comparison with the wars of the past when they so often constituted one of the weapons in strategy and tactics. Thus, we devised no counterpart in our trade protective measures to those expeditions with which the French threatened Ireland, forcing our squadrons in the Bay to congregate off Brest and so leaving Rochefort open for the escape of their convoys.

In a sense, the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* effected a diversion. The uncertainty as to where this squadron would strike was felt everywhere. At the Cape, the expedition to German S.W. Africa was affected by it; in the North Sea a battle cruiser was withdrawn and sent across the Atlantic; other cruisers were dispatched to various points the safety of which was feared for. This, though less a diversion in the accepted sense of the word than the effect of an unlocated squadron, may with perfect correctness be classified under that heading in its effect though not in its design.

Tactical diversions, on the lines of numerous operations on the coasts of France and Italy in the wars of the eighteenth century, were, so far as is known, infrequent. A feint at disembarkation at the head of the Gulf of Saros at 4 A.M. on the day of the Gallipoli landing, successfully detained a division of Turkish troops until late in the afternoon. Liman von Sanders himself proceeded to a hill near Bulair to deal with this; and eventually, in the words of a German staff officer, 'took on his shoulders the grave responsibility' of removing the division to support the heavily pressed defenders of the southern part of the Peninsula. Other small landings in that part, causing apprehensions of attack upon Smyrna, were, it is believed, not without effect in tying down Turkish troops in that part of Asia Minor.

Prince von Bulow has prided himself on the diversionary effect of the High Sea Fleet.[1] 'Our battle fleet,' he wrote, 'forces the main strength of the British navy to remain in the North Sea and thus prevents England from using her full strength at the Straits, in

[1] *Imperial Germany*, p. 39.

which submarine warfare has assumed overwhelming proportions.' This is comparable to the Spanish plan of war of 1739, described by Duro, by which the principal fleets of Spain would occupy the attention of the British fleet and leave the seas open for the action of their privateers. In each case, a lesser force was occupying the attention of one far greater: a similar idea runs through many of the French war plans of the eighteenth century.

Diversions in the form of combined naval and military operations upon a strategical basis have not been used, unless the Dardanelles expedition be regarded as a diversion. The extent to which it is practicable to effect such diversions as those used in the old wars is a question of no small importance. The conditions of sea war have undeniably changed. Railways have altered the proportionate speed of sea and land transport, submarines have made the conditions of sea travel precarious without considerable escort. The question as to whether diversions and attacks from the air and sea upon the railway communications would have been of value in the Palestine and Mesopotamia campaigns, will probably be as much disputed in the future as Pitt's policy of diversions upon the coast of France is disputed to-day.

In the case of the Dardanelles—an expedition carried out under cover in the first instance of the Grand Fleet and the French Mediterranean Fleet which controlled the exits from the German and Austrian bases—we are still uncertain whether it was intended as a diversion which might be converted into a decisive blow which would eliminate Turkey, or as a decisive stroke from the beginning. The information in the published

reports leaves us in doubt; for both reasons may be inferred. As the first proposal was that the fleet should act alone, one may suppose that its appearance off Constantinople was expected to produce an effect corresponding to Martin's threat against Naples in 1742, in which by threatening to bombard the city he procured an assurance that the Neapolitan troops would take no further part in the war. On the other hand, we had a precedent in Duckworth's previous exploit, and it would seem probable that the German military advisers to the Sultan's Government would succeed in persuading it, as Sebastiani did in the earlier case, that a fleet without the army could do little. It could bombard Constantinople; but the Turk might feel secure that no British fleet would do this. Mr. Morgenthau, it is true, expresses the opinion that the Turks would have given way to the threat. He may be right; but if they had not done so, the passage of the Straits would have been fruitless. Since a major operation needs some more secure foundation than this, the theory of a diversion in favour of the Russian troops in the Caucasus may be the true one; and this is supported by the advertisement which accompanied the operation and the lengthy and unconcealed preparations, neither of which would presumably have been features of an operation in which success must depend so entirely upon surprise.

Even, however, if we accept the diversion theory, we are in difficulties, since many important characteristics of a diversion were absent. Instead of being remote and difficult to reinforce, the objective—Constantinople—was probably the nearest and most easily reinforced of any important centre. The number of troops drawn away from the enemy's main force should exceed greatly

the number employed in the diversion; it is doubtful whether this was the case, or offered any prospects of being so. The enemy had time to prepare his defence, to reinforce his garrisons, to add to his artillery. The *threat* of the landing brought about this, so that, *quâ* diversion, the expedition had done its part before a soldier's foot was put ashore.

Thus, look at it how we may, even with all that has since been written, it is not easy to understand whether it was intended by its designers as a diversion or a vital blow; and until that is clear, its place in the main strategy must be indeterminate. The naval part of the campaign bristles however with interest apart from this. Begun under conditions of an undisputed command of the sea over the greater part of the voyage, the campaign was continued under conditions of dispute after the arrival of the submarine. The line of communications was eventually exposed throughout its length to attack of U-boats. Even the waters between its advanced base and the landing places were similarly threatened. That so many transports should have been passed through these dangers with so little loss must be taken into serious consideration by those whose vision of the future navies eliminates the surface ship, and who are inclined to pin their whole faith on underwater craft, more powerful, true, than those of to-day, but none the less suffering from the same incapacity to stand serious punishment.

Coastal Bombardments

The Germans resorted early in the day to coastal bombardment, first by the *Goeben* on the coast of Algeria,

later on Hartlepool, Scarborough and other towns; the Austrians pursued a similar line of conduct on the Italian coast. In most cases undefended towns were chosen. At Hartlepool and at Porto Buso the enemy appears to have been unaware of the defences; at Scarborough he claimed that there was a 6-inch battery, but the ships did not fire in its supposed direction. The policy had a double aim, civil and military. The disturbance among the civilian population and the distress caused would, it was hoped, be embarrassing to the Government and do economic harm to the country; this would react upon the military measures on land and sea, keeping the country in apprehension of landings and so tending to restrain the dispatch of troops, hampering the freedom of action of the fleet by making it take steps to defend the coast line, and, arising out of that, affording opportunity of laying mines and submarine traps into which the fleet would be drawn by the bait of the bombarding squadrons.

Looking back into the past we can find an analogy in the raids carried out by Spaniards, French and others upon coast towns. Bombardment was usually a fruitless measure—Rowley's cruise along the Riviera bombarding the towns was contemptuously dismissed by the French governor with the words: '*Ces messieurs bombardent volontiers les choux.*' But landings were more effective and were capable of doing an amount of damage comparable to the runaway bombardments of to-day.

Defence against such attacks was not expected to be furnished by the fleet in the old wars. The fleet restricted the size of the force the enemy could send, and the time it could spend off any part of the coast; it operated to limit the powers of the enemy to do harm.

But direct protection was furnished by the actual fixed local defences, those small batteries which cover the approaches to so many harbours in the kingdom and abroad, whose ruins remain to this day. If this nature of warfare had been continued during this war some form of fixed artillery defence would probably have been found necessary. How effective the modern long-range gun is as a coast-protector, when well mounted on shore and furnished with good range-finding apparatus, the German defences erected on the coast of Belgium have shown. In Italy, gun defences were employed after a series of bombardments had been made from the sea; and in some East Coast towns a form of fixed local defence was provided by monitors in the harbours.[1]

One difficulty in dealing with this form of warfare lay in the fact that no form of retaliation in kind was practicable. The German North Sea coast was not dotted with prosperous health resorts close to a bold shore, easy of approach. Another was a natural repugnance to employ this degenerate form of warfare, even in reprisal. On both of these factors the Germans, applying the doctrines of their war book, undoubtedly counted; and the fact that it was practicable thus to 'insult'—in the old terms—the British coasts was helpful in keeping up the moral of their crews and in making the German populace believe that their navy was commanding the North Sea. They affected British dispositions, squadrons being sent to the Humber and the Medway in consequence of the raids.[2] In the Adriatic they led to the detachment of an Italian cruiser

[1] The remarks of Captain Daveluy on coast defence in *La Stratégie* may be consulted, and their bearing on this question.

[2] *The Grand Fleet, 1914–16*, pp. 183, 289.

squadron to Venice, with the resulting loss of one of its number.

Small Craft and Monitors

The experience of past wars in the matter of small craft from cruisers downwards has been repeated in this war. Every war of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century brought out the necessity for a very great number of small cruising vessels. They were required for innumerable services. Their numbers bore no direct proportion to the numbers of the same vessels possessed by the enemy, but were dependent upon the services which fell to them. The cry for ' more frigates ' runs through the Admiral's dispatches from before Anson to after Nelson, and on more than one occasion commanders in the Mediterranean or the West Indies were unable to protect trade with the number of frigates, sloops and gunboats provided, and had to supply their needs by the purchase of local vessels. The coming of the submarine brought about a repetition of the old situations; and every destroyer and torpedo-boat capable of steaming proved an employable vessel.

Another old type of vessel was resuscitated during the war—the bomb-ketch, in its modern form of monitor. The old bomb-ketch with her 13-inch mortar was employed on all coastal operations, manned by ' the Train ' —the artillery—and did good service whenever coastal bombardments were needed.[1] It was not long, in this war, before some type of high-angle gun-carrying vessel was required to co-operate with troops off the Flanders

[1] The instructions were given in November 1914 to prepare designs of heavy monitors. See Sir E. Tennyson d'Eyncourt's speech at the Institution of Naval Architects, *The Times*, April 10, 1919.

coast and subsequently to take part in operations in the Levant and Adriatic. The operations of the small craft on the Belgian coast and the Yser in the early months of the war were of great military importance in delaying the advance of the German army and thus affording time for flooding the country. Even if we do not construct such vessels in peace, it is not unimportant to have plans for their construction ready, according to the political situation of the day.

Decisive Action

The war has not only brought about no change of opinion concerning the importance of decisive action between the fleets, but has abundantly confirmed and brought home to everybody the fact that decisive battle is the essential preliminary to effective control of the sea. Fleet action does not itself exert control, but it renders it possible. It is for its results that decisive battle is supremely valuable. The clearness with which we can see that the effective command of communications at sea is the ultimate aim of the war on the water permits us to appreciate how important a factor the battle fleets represent.

To Germany, a decisive fleet action meant everything. The fleets of the Allies were cutting off her supplies and setting up a continual pressure upon the whole population, civil and military included. At the time of the Peninsular War, the operations in Spain were spoken of as the ' Spanish ulcer.' In this war the operations at sea might be called the ' maritime ulcer,' eating into the life of the whole population. When a morbid growth becomes malignant in the human body,

it is necessary to remove it by surgical operation. So with the national body; and the only operation by which Germany could rid herself of this was the destruction of the Grand Fleet in battle.

It seems, however, practically certain that Germany did not believe the sea pressure would be effective. War would not last long enough for sea-power—already, as she hoped, crippled by conventions towards which she had worked in peace, as Bernhardi had shown—to make itself seriously felt. The continental Allies would be swiftly beaten on land and must succumb. Without their aid the British navy would not do much; and, peace being achieved, the German navy would be needed for the final struggle against Britain.

This miscalculation as to the immediate success of the military campaign was a fatal one. It has already been remarked that this conviction of certain victory in a short time may have affected German minor strategy in relation to the interception of or delaying the British Expeditionary Force, an omission which gravely compromised her military campaign. It no less tended to compromise such chances of success as she may have had in the maritime campaign—chances small enough it is true, but in war a chance cannot be thrown aside for that reason. Naval strength was more nearly balanced at the beginning of the war than at any later period. In August, Great Britain had a one-third superiority in battleships of the first class, Germany a fifty per cent. superiority in destroyers.[1]

Modern war is largely dependent upon economic factors, as Marshal Foch has pointed out. The power

[1] Admiral Tirpitz wished to bring about a fleet action at once, but was overruled.

to produce new material, or to utilise the productive capacities of neutrals, is of the highest value. If time were afforded, the great manufacturing and shipbuilding activities of Great Britain would come into play, and furnish fresh units to her fleet, increasing the predominance it possessed at the beginning of the war. Germany, with lesser resources of her own and cut off from outer help, could not expand her fleet to a like degree. Delay in seeking a decision at sea could therefore tend only to lessen her chances from a material point of view.

Probably the same may be said from a tactical point of view. Delay increased British tactical efficiency more than it increased that of the Germans ; and it gave time for the Commander-in-Chief to draw up his tactical instructions, previously non-existent, and impart them to the fleet.[1]

There was indeed plenty to discourage Germany from deliberately forcing an action at sea. She had opposed to her a numerically stronger British force of ships of the line, the superiority in modern ships being particularly great. She could not, in common prudence, rate the efficiency of the British fleet at a lower order than her own, however much she may have contemned it beforehand. But it was possible to counteract in some measure that predominance by the choice of the locality for fighting. The difficulties of bringing the whole British destroyer force into action at any given moment has been alluded to as a factor in favour of the Germans. ' If our fleet had arrived on the scene without destroyers the Germans would have possessed no mean advantage.' Such was the opinion of the British Com-

[1] See *The Grand Fleet, 1914–16*, p. 47.

mander-in-Chief. An attack upon the transports and ports of embarkation and disembarkation in the Channel offered the double objects of crippling the communications of the army, delaying its arrival, and of bringing the Grand Fleet down to fight in the area of greatest advantage to the German fleet, under conditions in which it could exert its whole strength, while the Grand Fleet might be short of destroyers and come into action after running the gauntlet of mines and submarines. Under such conditions and with such possibilities open it cannot be said that an attempt to obtain a decision was hopeless; although there still would remain to the Allies, in the case of a defeat of the Grand Fleet at sea, the untouched navies of France and Japan, whose transfer to the North Sea could not be considered by the Admiralstab as impossible.

On the British side a decisive victory was none the less needed. The struggle was conducted on all the oceans behind the cover of the Grand Fleet, which, like the Western Squadron of the eighteenth century, was the corner-stone of the whole structure. The object of the Grand Fleet was to secure the free and unhindered action of the cruisers and small craft operating from Norway to China, whether they were escorting troops or trade, patrolling, hunting surface or submarine commerce destroyers, or acting tactically in conjunction with troops in coastal operations. To all of these it afforded cover; and it stood as a constant bar to any attempt to invade either the territory of this country or any of those of the Dominions or Allies that could be reached only by sea.

So long as the German main fleet remained in harbour and did not attempt to break into these overseas

operations the Grand Fleet acted in a potential sense only, though none the less real. Its aim, however, was to destroy at the earliest opportunity that naval force of the enemy, since its object could not be fulfilled in completeness so long as the High Sea Fleet was in existence. Decisive victory over the High Sea Fleet was essential to definite security at sea, for that fleet was playing its part in making sea communications precarious by containing a great force of ships of all classes otherwise available for the defence of those vital communications.

A decisive victory is valuable not for the mere matter of having destroyed a certain number of battleships, but because the destruction of the main fighting force of the enemy opens the way for attack upon that which is defended or supported by that fleet, to increase the pressure upon the enemy, and reduce his pressure upon ourselves. Not the victory, but the results of the victory, are what we have to keep in view.

The High Sea Fleet directly affected the military campaign, which, as we have seen, is the principal factor—provided the enemy country can hold out economically and morally—in bringing him to a peace by the occupation, or threat of occupation, of his country. If the High Sea Fleet were destroyed, the last possibility of invasion of the British Islands or even of military raids would be removed. Judging by the large number of troops in the country throughout the war, one must conclude that the Government was not prepared to rely upon the fleet to prevent an invasion, and that troops were retained at home who would otherwise have been available for service abroad. Why —if this be so—the Government should not have relied upon the fleet, we do not know. But the effect, as

several writers have pointed out,[1] was that the army in France was on more than one critical occasion shorter of men than it need have been. Would the battle of the Somme have resulted differently if more troops had been available ? and were there in this country enough to have influenced the fighting ? or would the disasters in March and April 1918 have taken place, or been so serious, if some of the quarter-million or more men, who were hastily transported across the Channel after the first onrush of the Germans, had been there before ? Shortage of men had reactions in other theatres—Palestine, for example. If, then, the military operations were prejudiced at any time by shortage of men, and success deferred or misfortune incurred because of fear of invasion, it is clear that a naval victory of a decisive character, which would have wholly removed that fear, was a matter of the highest moment throughout the war.

We know there was a second issue of importance—our power of supplying the armies on land, of feeding them and the people of the Allied nations ; this depended on the sea. It was threatened, and most seriously, by the submarine campaign. How highly the enemy counted on that campaign to bring him success we know from his own statements and from the risks he deliberately took in embarking upon it. Was the submarine warfare connected in any way with the battle fleets ?

A decisive battle would have removed the need of battleship cover for the outer operations. If the enemy's main forces were destroyed, no fear would have existed of heavy ships breaking out to interfere with the passage

[1] *E.g.* Colonel A. M. Murray in *Fortnightly Review*, March 1919, article on the ' Teaching of Marshal Foch.'

of transports, or of falling upon the scattered small craft cruising, patrolling, escorting or hunting submarines. The immediate effect of the destruction of the High Sea Fleet would have released the battleships of the Grand Fleet, wholly or in part, according to the decisive nature of the victory. This *de facto* would have released destroyers. So long as a fleet action was at any moment possible, some destroyers were needed with the fleet, partly for screening against submarines, partly for tactical functions in attacking the enemy ships in battle. The vessels so set free would have been available for the operations against the submarines, for which it was impossible to have too many to perform the numerous duties required. Thus, direct assistance would at once have been given to the anti-submarine part of the war by a decisive victory over the High Sea Fleet.

Besides the submarine attack upon communications, the enemy employed, as we have seen, a raiding policy. Defence against such a form of attack is afforded by cruisers—which may be of any class of ship from battleships to scouting vessels according to the old terminology—employed either on lines of observation in the exits from the North Sea, on patrol, or on convoy duty. The cruisers proper, whose services were needed with the main fleet for scouting and the many duties which fell to them, would no longer have been needed for fleet work ; the battleships themselves could have been used (as indeed some older battleships were) for convoy, setting free the faster and lighter vessels for duties requiring higher speed. Thus, better defence could have been given to oceanic commerce.

The defence of communications would have profited by yet another result of decisive victory over the battle-

fleet. One means of bridling the submarine was mining; the reply to mining is mine-sweeping. By having a greater number of vessels available, and by having these supported by superior forces of battleships, sallying from the German ports would have been prevented; a more effective campaign against the enemy mine-sweepers would become practicable; that is to say, the minefields would be better guarded. It has always been a doctrine that a defensive minefield must be covered by gunfire, either of fortresses or patrol craft. The same is applicable to offensive minefields; they, no less than those in the approaches to our ports, need the protection of artillery to keep them constantly effective and unswept.

Military operations in Russia would have profited no less than those in France and Flanders if the High Sea Fleet had been destroyed. The Russian defeats and the occupation of Riga were the result of co-operation of the German fleet and army. How far those defeats contributed to the final *débâcle* in Russia and the consequent later misfortunes in France we can judge for ourselves.

Outside Europe, operations in other military theatres would have felt the effect of a decisive fleet action. With greater freedom of movement on the water, possibilities of co-operation on a greater scale between navy and army in Palestine might have presented themselves. A stricter blockade, if more vessels had been available, might have been possible on the coast of East Africa. In April 1915 and a year later, the blockade runners which succeeded in landing munitions contributed materially to Von Lettow's powers of holding out.

It is not to be pretended that the release of the Grand Fleet would have permitted all these measures to be

taken; but they afford examples of the wealth of useful employment there was for ships of all classes. In this there is nothing new. It is a repetition of the experience of past war, and of an axiom of military science. Can we then wonder that the enemy, not appreciating in the first instance how long drawn out the war was to be, and feeling that his chances of success in battle were small against the superior forces eventually opposing him, should have declined to offer us an opportunity of destroying a fleet which was affording such valuable support to his operations on land and sea? The so-called 'communications' theory has been accused of ignoring the importance of decisive action. It not only does not ignore it, but attaches the highest possible value to it, recognising that decisive action clears the way to obtaining command in as complete a sense as the means disposable admit.

We are now told, on the authority of a German officer, that the engagement of May 31 was decisive so far as the enemy was concerned. He had no intention of seeking a second battle after the shattering of that engagement. We must accept this single statement with reserve, for others have said that moral rose after the engagement, and we know that the fleet was at sea in April 1918. But even if moral had declined to the extent expressed by the German officer, from the British point of view the battle fell short of being decisive, as we were unaware that this was their state of mind. The result of the fighting did not permit us to gather the real fruits of victory; we could not take those steps towards increasing our pressure at sea, or strengthening our measures of defence of trade and transport services, which are the tangible signs of decisive action. A

victory which is lacking in its most essential factor—the power of taking advantage of it—is not decisive, but partial. It may amount to a tactical success; a decisive victory alters the whole strategical situation.[1]

Three German Opportunities

When any great operation is undertaken on the success of which victory may hang, every available resource needs to be brought into play. Germany made three outstanding efforts to obtain an immediate decision. First, her great blow on opening the war, intended utterly to crush France and bring her to her knees in a fortnight. Next, the submarine campaign, which would reduce England to starvation in six months. Lastly, the great offensive of March 1918, which would destroy the British and French armies before American assistance could arrive in effective strength. In each case great risks, both political and military, were taken, because the object was held to justify them, and the preparation to be perfect enough to assure success. Taking such risks, it is strange that she hesitated to extend her hardihood to the sea. The German navy played less than its part in each.

We are now aware that the only force in the Channel in the early days of August 1914 was the Channel Squadron, consisting of some of the oldest classes of battleships and cruisers, just mobilised from nucleus

[1] Compare, for instance, the situation in the North of Europe before and after the Battle of Copenhagen, or in the Mediterranean and Channel before and after the Battle of the Nile. Note the effects of Anson's and Hawke's battles in 1747, the immediate breaking up of the large squadron which became possible, the changed situation in India and America. Quiberon Bay, Trafalgar, Gravelines tell the same tale.

crews, and without any destroyer flotilla. A separate destroyer force was at Harwich, with no tactical relationship to this squadron. This weak force could have been destroyed in half an hour by the High Sea Fleet, after which nearly every port in the Channel on the British and French coasts could have been blocked and mined from Newhaven to Avonmouth. There was not even need to wait to see whether Britain were coming into the war. Russia and Germany were at war on August 2, France on August 3 ; it was not until 11 P.M. on August 4 that Great Britain declared war. There was time to have blocked the French ports at least before the declaration was made.

There was also time to have blocked them before the landing began. Troops—fighting troops—did not arrive at Boulogne until August 14, and there was an approximately similar interval at the other ports of disembarkation. The port of Boulogne was practically undefended ; its entrance was narrow—one ship would close it ; and the destruction of the breakwater could not fail to result in the silting up of the entrance. Calais and Dieppe are correspondingly vulnerable.

The English harbours were not all so easy to block ; but those to the eastward, Newhaven and Folkestone, are of a similarly artificial nature, while Avonmouth, a place of great importance for transport, is dependent on locks which could be destroyed. The local defences at none of these places could be considered of a serious nature. Lord Jellicoe tells us that it would not have been difficult for the enemy to cause us some loss in transports, and that he (the enemy) would have had a good chance of making an attack and returning to his base before the Grand Fleet could interfere, having only

to deal with the comparatively light forces in northern waters. More easily still could he have blocked the ports themselves.[1]

The enemy, it is true, could not tell what the organisation for the defence of the passage of the army would be. But did he take any steps to discover this? Could he have found, for example, by scouting, how the Grand Fleet was being employed, its general situation and movements? This fleet, as we have seen, was the essential factor; for he could, as Lord Jellicoe has pointed out, have destroyed the other forces. Sir Edward Grey had told M. Cambon on August 2 that the German fleet would not be allowed to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts, but in actuality there was nothing but a weak force to prevent them from doing so. The enemy did not know this, nor do we know how the situation appeared to his eyes. Blame or praise must always be withheld until the circumstances are known. But this does not alter the fact that an opportunity did exist for Germany to employ her fleet to assist her army in obtaining the speedy victory essential to the success of her war plan; and that she took no steps to profit by it—a strange thing in so military-minded a nation. No disclosure will be of greater interest to those who study strategy than that concerning the German passivity at sea in the early days. One is inclined to feel that she was selling the bear's skin before killing the bear.

The next great effort to obtain a decision towards which the High Sea Fleet could contribute was the submarine campaign. Germany's object was a wholesale destruction of shipping. Every extra ton that could

[1] Tirpitz, ii. 290, 291, on the attack of the fleet.

be sunk was of importance to her. It is an accepted principle that all forces not taking part in a decisive battle are wasted, yet Germany withheld a part—her surface vessels—from active co-operation in this campaign, which was one prolonged battle. We have seen the damage done by the *Möwe* in her two cruises. If, when the unrestricted submarine campaign which brought America into the war was begun, Germany had sent out a great number of armed ships, accompanying the ocean campaign with activity of the High Sea Fleet in the North Sea, the situation created would have been most serious. The submarine campaign would have been helped by surface ship warfare against the patrolling craft. Trawlers, drifters, and yachts, the weak vessels operating against the submarines as escorts and patrols, could have been attacked; and although no prolonged operations could have been maintained against them, their defence would only have been provided by a withdrawal of cruisers from some important area, possibly from the Grand Fleet. That she would have lost a great number of ships is certain; but the losses in British light craft would have materially assisted the operations of the submarine. It is a fundamental principle of commerce warfare that the most effectual action is that directed against the vessels that protect the commerce—the old rule, in fact, that the fighting vessels of the enemy are the primary objective in war. The combination of attack upon the defending craft and upon ocean shipping would have produced a situation by no means easy to cope with, at a time when no organised system of convoy had been established. The *Möwe* destroyed 50,000 tons on her first voyage, 112,000 on her second. What effect might have been produced by several *Möwes*, in

loss of tonnage, dislocation of trade, and dispersal of British cruisers?

The third occasion demanding a great German effort was that of the offensive of March 1918. Upon the success of this attack everything depended. If it succeeded it was possible that the war would be won. If it failed, it was probable that she lost the war. The vital element at that moment was the reinforcing of the Allied army, the replacement of the lost guns and ammunition. The Channel communications were of supreme importance, and, as in the first opening, the French and British ports were the keys to the situation. If they could be blocked the reinforcements would be delayed, guns could not be replaced, the retreat might be converted into a rout, the Channel ports left open to her, and even the communications with America imperilled. But she made no effort to cut this arterial line of communications. That a break would have been difficult admits of no doubt. Minefields, submarines, an intelligence service, the efficiency of which had been brought home to the German Staff, would all have to be provided against. But were these obstacles more formidable in their nature than those on land against which the enemy sent his armies, and were the losses which he might expect at sea comparable to those he willingly accepted on land? Throughout the war Germany showed no hesitation in losing men in the campaign in France and Flanders; but she hesitated —more, held back—from taking similar risks at sea. By so doing she contributed to the success of the Allied cause.

Unity

Allied causes in the past have more than once suffered from lack of unity of aim and employment of the associated navies. In the wars of the Austrian Succession and American Independence this failure to combine was a most marked feature in the French and Spanish naval operations.[1] It saved this country from serious losses, if not disaster. In the recent war it was not practicable for our enemies to act in combination on any large scale at all. The Russians were in some fear that the Austrian fleet might give trouble in the Black Sea if it could escape from the Adriatic, and assist the Turkish campaign at the time of the advance on Trebizond; but either the pre-occupation of defence of the Austrian coast, or a hesitancy to face the possibility of meeting the combined squadrons of the Allies, kept the fleet of Austria within its harbours, though an attempt to reach the Black Sea while the French squadron was at Malta would have been far from hopeless.

Wars in the past have been affected in nearly every case by internal discord. Disaffected parties in the State have placed a brake upon the powers of their countries and caused anxieties to statesmen and commanders. In the early years of Queen Elizabeth's reign the confused relationships which grew up through the Reformation, Scotland's Queen, the need of establishing union between the kingdoms, imposed extreme caution upon her foreign policy. Similarly in France, until Richelieu's policy was accomplished, the French

[1] *Cf.* Daveluy: 'Les Alliés, au lieu de profiter de l'occasion qui s'offrait de lui porter un coup fatal, lui fournirent sa seule chance de salut en poursuivant deux buts à la fois' (*La Stratégie*, p. 339).

Government had to contend with an opposition consisting of traitorous nobles and princes acting in concert with Spain, and was in consequence weak. The internal discord of the Fronde prevented France from interfering with Cromwell in 1652, and supporting their previous allies, the Dutch.

In England, again, between 1678 and 1681, the internal dissensions caused by the Exclusion Bill and the 'Popish plots' forced her into a neutrality which formed a condition of French ascendancy, and the liberties of Europe were sacrificed through the internal discord in this kingdom. Again, Jacobites in the war with Spain in 1727 and in the war of the Austrian Succession, and in Ireland in 1798, added prodigiously to the cares of the Government and the responsibilities of the fleet and army. We may recollect that the Battle of the Nile relieved the anxiety that the Toulon expedition might be going to Ireland.

In this war we have repeated the experience of the past. Naval force has had to be deflected in consequence, though in what number or strength we do not know; troops have been needed, recruiting has suffered. Eager, therefore, as all sections must be to see a contented Ireland, none can be more so than the Admiralty and War Office, who bear the responsibility of the defence of the kingdom.

Labour troubles have been another source of weakness, though not to the extent that some expected. The coal strike in the middle of 1915 influenced the movements of the fleet,[1] and there were complaints of delays in repairing ships. It is probably correct to say that the influence of these disturbances on the course of the war

[1] *The Grand Fleet, 1914–16*, pp. 231, 232, 236.

was small; but it is certain that they affected the cost and caused grave anxiety. The fact that there should have been any disunion points, however, to a joint in our armour, and reminds naval officers that they themselves are as interested as every other person in the country in a system of education which cultivates ideals and teaches future citizens something of the history of their country, cultivates a love for it, and is not confined to the aim of getting money as easily and quickly as possible and then enjoying life. Lord Cromer's paper in the *Nineteenth Century*, deploring the total absence of any teaching of patriotism in the schools of the country, had its lesson for everybody, and we might well consider taking an example from the French in making the fighting services schools of citizenship.

In the same way as unity of all units of the community is a source of strength, so is co-operation of the several units of the alliance. On the side of the Allies there was a great preponderance of naval strength, if all could be used as a common force; but those difficulties under which coalitions almost invariably labour, and in which localised interests play so large a part, were not absent.[1] After our experiences of the present war, we shall perhaps be less inclined sweepingly to condemn our adversaries of the past for their failures to combine their forces whole-heartedly. The thing is difficult, and will be difficult as long as human nature remains what it is; though this is not to say that with good will and a full appreciation of the whole of the problem it cannot be done at sea, as fully as it was on shore, or that effort

[1] The difficulties of arranging for co-operation of the Allied fleets in the Mediterranean are described, from the Italian point of view, by Professor Manfroni in his book *I nostri alleati navali* on Italy and her Allies.

should not be made to attain to the fullest co-operation, the most complete pooling of resources, and absolute co-ordination of strategy. It would be idle to pretend that the Allies succeeded in reaching this to the full in the recent war, and foolish to hide it from sight as though there were no lessons to be learned.

Such co-operation is a plant of slow growth; it cannot be suddenly secured when war breaks out. It is the result of many influences, of which not the least is education. The effects of localised strategy need to be fully studied in our schools of naval and military thought. It is fully as important as what is too often looked on as the purely military side. The bigger and broader side of general intercommunication between the peoples, by which they can learn to know each other and each other's problems better, is equally important. It affects the statesmen and the people; and now that war cannot be conducted without the whole-hearted help of every individual, this knowledge of each other's problems and difficulties, making as it will for a wider outlook and eliminating something of suspicion, is needed.

This understanding of each other's problems and needs brings us in immediate touch with a very practical and important question of naval policy—the strength of the British fleet.

The war, while it has furnished our neighbours on both sides of the Atlantic with an illustration of the influence of sea-power while allied to land-power, has also made clear its limitations. The lesson is not new. Nelson appreciated it when he found himself engaged in operations in the Mediterranean in 1796. 'We English have to regret,' he wrote, 'that we cannot always decide the fate of empires on the sea.' What Nelson said then

of our inability to decide the fate of empires is equally true to-day. The limitations of sea-power may indeed be greater, for inland communications by road and rail, and consequently facilities of conducting trade through neutral ports and in neutral bottoms, are greater than they were when goods were moved by wagons on few and indifferent roads. For Great Britain single-handed to blockade any single antagonist would be practically impossible. In this war she had by 1915 the help of four other maritime Powers, but the isolation of the Central Empires was not complete until the intervention of the United States. A blockade of any single Power, using the methods of 'extended contraband' of this war, presents great difficulties. It offers occasions for bringing Britain into conflict with every neutral. It was only owing to the fact that the land frontiers of the enemies were sealed by the armies, and that every nation of importance was either actively assisting with her navies at sea, or passively by withholding trade, that the eventual degree of isolation was procured which contributed to the victory.

While, therefore, in virtue of our exceptionally situated Empire, scattered over the world and connected by the oceans, our interests at sea stand in a different category from those of any other Power, at the same time our capacity to subdue any enemy by means of our navy is limited, because directly we begin to apply it in full measure we risk the danger of throwing neutrals into the scale against us. The armed coalitions of the past and the example of Germany to-day are sufficient to show this.[1] It is only when we are allied with

[1] *Cf.* the reference to this in a letter in *The Times*, April 8, 1919, on 'Sea Power and the Naval Forces under the League of Nations.'

military and naval Powers, who can close the land frontiers, shut their own harbours to enemy trade, and contribute such strength that the remaining neutrals cannot oppose the measures of control adopted, that we can produce the result seen to-day. Such a position infers agreement on the part of those other Powers that our cause is just; and in such a case, other nations not only have nothing to fear from a British Empire strong at sea, but even reason to be glad of the assistance which such an Empire can bring in case of dispute.

ENGLISH STRATEGY IN THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

When the dishonourable breach of faith committed by Frederick II of Prussia in invading Silesia in 1740 brought about the vast Continental War of the Austrian Succession, England found herself faced, as she had been in Louis XIV's time, with the problems of whether she should intervene, and if so, what should be the method of employment of her national strength—military, naval and financial—to bring about a satisfactory peace, that true object of war.

One constant aim of the policy of Great Britain was the preservation of the liberties of Europe. These could only be safeguarded by the frustration of attempts on the part of any Power, or combination of Powers, so to dominate Europe that their word would become law to all the lesser states. This policy of the Balance of Power led her necessarily into making compacts and coalitions in opposition to what was then the aggressive and domineering factor in the European system—the Bourbon alliance. To preserve the balance she pledged her word to support the Pragmatic Sanction, since the ruin of the House of Austria would have left the Bourbons without any effectual rival, and the remaining states and princedoms would have existed merely at the pleasure of the dominant Powers, to be absorbed

into them as expediency, or its modern counterpart 'bitter necessity,' should dictate.

The policy of the Balance of Power was, however, not altruistic only. It was a policy which was dictated by the unchanging law of self-preservation. This was clearly stated by Walpole in a speech on April 15, 1741, in which he pointed out that Austria was being attacked by France in order that an Emperor should be placed upon the throne who should owe his dignity to the French king. An alliance would follow, the outcome of which would be that the weaker Powers would first be subdued, and, when they had been absorbed into the French dominions, the turn of Great Britain would follow.[1] Counter alliances were thus needed for our benefit as much as for that of the smaller kingdoms. If we remained in isolation, evading continental entanglements, we might become rich and prosperous; but this very prosperity would but excite envy in France, leading to our eventual destruction when that country had developed a situation which would enable her to take active steps to satisfy her greed. This was the underlying sentiment which led us to make arrangements and coalitions; and it is satisfactory to us to remember that when the test came and the princes of the Continent shamelessly broke their compacts, the British Minister prepared to fulfil those of this country and moved for a subsidy of £300,000 and 10,000 troops. In reply to those critics who pretended that the quarrel was none of ours and who would have had us follow the continental example, Walpole with plainness and honesty declared that the fact that the others had violated their word constituted no reason why this country should do so.

[1] *Parliamentary History*, 'Debate on Subsidies,' April 13, 1741.

It was indeed essential in the eyes of most men that Great Britain should take part in the war and support Austria. 'The House of Austria,' said Mr. Sandys in a speech in Parliament, 'is the Ucalegon of Great Britain.' If the house of your next-door neighbour is burning, it is time to look out for your own. 'Holland may at least be consumed,' he continued, 'but the old Spanish maxim, that the only way to come at Holland is to pass through England, is known to France and Spain.' To subdue England, Austria would first be destroyed; and, therefore, for England to abstain from taking part would be to accept being defeated in detail. Arguments on these lines were adduced and developed by many other speakers in Parliament. If France conquered the Netherlands and secured herself against attack by land, she could then proceed to develop her navy. Much of the money previously devoted to the army would be available for the fleet, and, with her resources aided by those of Spain, to whom she was allied, she would outbuild us, capture our colonies, our trade, and possibly our very kingdom. The defence of our interests and our Dominions in all the seas, together with the defence of the Kingdom, would prove a burden that we could not support against the naval forces which the Bourbons would be enabled to develop.[1]

There was always a section of politicians prepared to see none but the most amiable intentions in the France of Fleury and Louis XV; who decried or derided all opinions to the contrary, however strongly these opinions might be supported by the palpable evidence of a strong party at the French Court, which was

[1] Vide *Parliamentary History*, Debates of December 8, 1741; January 21, 1742 (in particular Pulteney's speech); December 6, 1742.

constantly urging the re-establishment of the Jacobites and the ending of the English 'despotism' at sea, as it was called by a French writer in a letter to M. Caylus in 1740.[1] But the common sense of the country prevailed, and England prepared to support the Queen of Hungary to maintain her just rights.

The manner in which the support should be given was the subject of widely divergent views. There were in the main two principal measures or lines of policy: either to conduct the war entirely by sea and in the Colonies, which may be called the maritime policy; or to conduct it partly by sea but largely by land in the main European theatre, which was more of a continental policy. In conjunction with each of these, in a varying degree, there was the policy of subsidies to enable our continental allies to maintain the struggle. The numerous debates in Parliament upon the war itself, and upon the subject of the standing army, furnish interesting evidence as to the views of the statesmen and politicians of the time upon this important point of national strategy.

Those who advocated the strategy of a purely maritime and colonial war, leaving the continental battlefields severely alone, advanced their views largely by arguments of a financial nature. We were, it was urged, an island nation, and therefore should not mix ourselves in continental struggles. And, being primarily a trading nation, we should not hamper our national interests, which centred upon trade, by the heavy expenses which a continental army would impose upon them. War, it was argued, should be waged in a manner which would advance the true interests of the nation, and these

[1] *Papers of Lady du Cane*, Hist. MS. Comm.

were commercial. We should sweep the commerce of the enemy from the seas, destroy his naval power and capture his colonies—sources of his wealth. By the monopolistic colonial system then in vogue we should thereby become sole master of the commerce of those colonies, whose products could only be exported to England and by her sold to continental buyers, the profits of re-exportation thus falling to the merchants of this country.

If, however, we should take part in a land war, the extra expense would involve extra taxation. Taxation imposed upon imports to raise money cramped commerce and hindered the re-exportation business, thus enhancing the prices of commodities to foreign countries, reducing trade, and leading to borrowing and unsound finance.[1]

A further argument of a different nature was that if this country did not afford military assistance on the Continent, the continental Powers would exert themselves more, as they very well could do, and would not look always to England to repair their omissions.[2]

Another argument of the same kind was that if our army were used on the Continent to assist to defend Europe against France, the interested Powers would leave the defence of such of their possessions as vitally affected Great Britain to her charge, and would themselves embark upon offensive operations in the increase of their own dominions. So, it was pointed out, had the Emperor behaved in King William's wars. When he saw that the Dutch and ourselves were ready to defend

[1] *Parliamentary History*, xiii. 176.

[2] Alderman Beckford, *ibid.* Also Lord Strange, vol. xiv., 'Debate on the subsidy to the Elector of Hanover,' 1752.

Flanders for him and in our own interests, he carried on a war against the Turks, leaving us to fight his battles elsewhere, although he might have made an honourable peace with the Sultan. So also in Queen Anne's wars the same potentate used his troops to oppress the Protestants of Hungary when he might have sent them to assist the campaigns in Germany and Flanders.[1]

A further example justifying this view arose later in the very war under discussion. In 1745 Austria, under the guidance of Kaunitz, endeavoured to leave the defence of her territory in Lombardy to the King of Sardinia and the British fleet, while with the Austrian forces she conducted an offensive campaign having for its object the conquest for herself of the kingdom of Naples.

Finally, it was urged by the apologists of the maritime policy that no success of France on land could affect us so long as we preserved our superiority at sea. No ignominious peace could be imposed upon us. By devoting our whole resources to the navy and to expeditions against the sources of wealth of the enemy, we could ensure both the free flow and increase of our commerce and the destruction of that of France and Spain, so that in the end the exhaustion of those Powers would be brought about and a satisfactory peace obtained. As to the military operations on the Continent, our fleet alone, without the help of a single soldier, could render the most important service in the Mediterranean by commanding the sea communications, transporting where necessary the armies of our allies, and preventing the enemy from moving troops by sea from France or Spain into Italy, or from making use of the sea for

[1] Velters Cornewall, *Parliamentary History*, xiii. 159.

carrying supplies to his army. If, on the other hand, we should take upon us the burden of a continental war, we must abandon offensive operations in America and the West Indies, for we could not conduct these in two important theatres at the same time.

Alderman Beckford summed up the views of this school in the shortest terms. 'The most effectual way,' he said, 'to assist our allies will always be to prosecute the war by sea and in America. . . . We may conquer from our enemies, they can conquer nothing from us, and our trade will improve by a total extinction of theirs.' [1]

The two factors essential to the success of this policy are clear. Firstly, that our continental allies should be strong enough on land to withstand the assaults of the Bourbon coalition without any help from ourselves; and, nextly, that we should be able, whatever the result of the continental campaign, to maintain our supremacy at sea, in the face of such maritime confederations which might be arranged against us in succeeding years under the guidance of a victorious Franco-Spanish alliance.

These views were strongly combated by the protagonists of the 'land-war' school. In the first place, it was pointed out, we were engaged by Treaty to furnish troops for the defence of Holland, and to uphold the rights of the Habsburg dynasty in the Netherlands. These countries could only be defended against French attack by an army on land, and in making their dispositions our allies counted upon our promised help. We had entered into an agreement and must now act upon it, whether in its conception it were right or wrong.

Another reason for carrying it out—apart from the

[1] *Parliamentary History*, xiii. 19.

question of honour—was that if Holland and the Austrian Netherlands were conquered owing to lack of co-operation, the ports of the former and the maritime force of the latter would be at the disposal of France. The material assets of French sea-power would thus be increased. But another and possibly more important result might be that those countries, incensed at our desertion of their cause, would willingly turn to our enemies and prove themselves ardently desirous to avenge themselves upon the nation which had deserted them.[1]

If we did not assist the armies on land there was the risk that our allies would be beaten. We simply could not afford to run the risk of seeing Europe conquered. Our navy alone could not assure that our allies would not be crushed. The conquest of the Netherlands by France, and of Lombardy by Spain, would place the Bourbon Powers in so strong a military position that they would no longer have anything to fear on land, and their whole attention could be devoted to their own navies and that of Holland. Then, with Portugal and the Italian States under the military thumb of the alliance and ordered to close their ports to us, with the Flemish and Dutch ports as bases of operations and trade, our navy, though we should strengthen it to the utmost, could not protect equally our Kingdom, our Colonies and our commerce.

Tariffs and treaties would be arranged against us at the bidding of France for the destruction of our trade in peace, and, when the Allied Powers were strong enough to engage us in war, first the trade and finally the Kingdom would succumb to the superior forces

[1] H. Fox, *Parliamentary History*, xiii. 169.

they would bring into the seas. Anticipating the policy of the Napoleonic decrees by sixty years, and repeating the same arguments as above, Mr. James West, a Member of Parliament, said, 'They might perhaps by threats or money get all the ports of the Baltic, except the Russian, shut against us; and in this case I should be glad to know how we could carry on even a naval war against the House of Bourbon, assisted by the Dutch. We might, it is true, fit out a most powerful navy, because all our merchant ships except those engaged in the East and West India trade would of course be laid up in our harbours: but as neither the French nor Spaniards would then have occasion to be at the expense of keeping up numerous land armies, they might in a year or two be able, with the assistance of the Dutch, to provide a navy at least equal if not superior to ours.'

As to our possible conquests in America and at sea, whose effect was so strongly represented by the maritime school, they would avail us nothing if the continental campaign were favourable to the Bourbons. The Colonies would be reconquered in Europe and their temporary loss by the enemy would not affect the final result. 'I fear,' said Hardwicke in a letter of August 17, 1741, to the Duke of Newcastle, 'that now America must be fought for in Europe. Whatever success we may have in the former, I doubt it will always *finally* follow the fate of the latter.' [1]

As to the ability of our allies to withstand the French attack, it was said that unless we sent troops to the Continent the Dutch would not move, and there would be only a weak Austrian contingent to defend the Netherlands. By herself Austria could not protect both

[1] *Life of Lord Hardwicke*, Yorke, i. 263.

her Flemish and Italian provinces. First the former and then the latter would be overrun and reduced. As a practical example of the need for furnishing troops, when the question arose after the war had been in progress for three years, Lord Perceval pointed out the results effected by the troops which had been raised or paid by Great Britain in 1743. Owing to the British, Hessian and Hanoverian army, 60,000 French troops had been detained on the Maine and were beaten at Dettingen. If these had been free to join the French armies in Bohemia and Bavaria, was it probable, asked the speaker, that the Queen of Hungary could have stood her own in Germany? Or could the King of Sardinia have resisted France, Spain and Naples unless this diversion had been made?

So ran in the main the arguments of the two schools of thought.

How, it may be asked, did events justify the views of either? The answer depends upon what the circumstances were which made France ready to bring the war to an end, and upon terms so incommensurate with the conquests of territory which her army had won for her in Flanders.

In the main campaign on the Continent, the decisive one of the war, the troops furnished by Great Britain rendered invaluable services. Without the British contingents the Dutch would certainly not have joined; without the British and Dutch opposition France would have made an easy conquest of Flanders. Two factors inimical to eventual French success were introduced by our intervention. A longer drawn out war was produced; and this, as de Noailles pointed out in a memorandum to Louis XV, was what France should take all

steps to avoid : and heavy losses were incurred, crippling her powers. If it had not been for the Anglo-Dutch-Austrian opposition in the Netherlands, France would have been in a position to transfer the fighting with greater powers at an earlier period to Germany or Lombardy before her material strength had tasted the exhaustion of restriction upon her trade. When the conquests she achieved are considered it can hardly be doubted that, freed from the incubus of the Flanders campaign, she would have succeeded against Austria and Sardinia. The Elector of Bavaria would have retained the Imperial Crown, the Habsburgs would have reverted to the Dukedom of Austria. The feared situation of a supreme France with no military power capable of opposing her would then have been reached, with its consequent later effects upon Great Britain.

But though the British army opposed the invasion of Flanders, it did not succeed in saving that country from conquest by the French, who were superior in preparation, numbers and leadership. This notwithstanding, they rendered invaluable aid in the war, and justified at least the arguments of those who advocated the continental strategy. With greater numbers they might have prevented the invasion, as the continental strategists desired they should do ; but whether Great Britain could have furnished the men and the money to provide these extra numbers, and at the same time conduct the offensive and defensive operations which fell to the navy, as well as financing the Governments of our allies, is another question. It was essential all these things should be done.

Our squadrons at sea cut off the French trade or

caused insurance rates to run so high that the trade automatically ceased; they ruined the rich and productive French islands in the West Indies; and they were the elemental determining factor in placing in our hands that possession which eventually neutralised the French conquests in Europe. Offensive colonial operations have sometimes been described as a frittering away of strength, and their authors are advised to concentrate upon the decisive point. Concentration is largely a matter of degree. A few thousand more troops landed in Flanders may mean a small percentage of the whole, hardly affecting a great campaign. The same number employed in operations against an enemy's only defended revictualling base in distant seas may lead to the real command of the sea in those waters, with its attendant advantages. So, in this case, the little expedition against Louisbourg, composed of some 4,000 colonists from the North American Colonies—principally Massachusetts—under Colonel William Pepperell, escorted and assisted by a detachment of the West Indian squadron under that admirable Irishman, Peter Warren, determined not only the command of the sea in North America, but the eventual fate of Flanders also.[1] Instead of our Colonies being conquered in Europe, as Hardwicke had feared, Europe was reconquered in America. Louisbourg was the key to the St. Lawrence. In our hands it was a threat more deadly to the great French colony of Canada than even the Scheldt in French hands was to England. France might hold the Scheldt and mass her troops in Antwerp, and there was every reason

[1] Many writers have stated that Louisbourg was exchanged for Madras. An examination of the despatches of Lord Sandwich, our plenipotentiary at Aix-la-Chapelle, shows that Flanders was the real subject of exchange.

to endeavour to prevent her from doing so; but even if she were so far successful, there still remained the dividing waters of the Narrow Seas to bar her passage into England. Before a French army could cross those waters a command of them, sufficient at the very least to protect it on its passage, was required. France did not then, nor could for some years, possess the naval forces necessary to obtain that command. England, on the other hand, had a command in the Home, West Indian and North American waters sufficient to enable her to transport an army to operate against Canada. Her colonists in America were ready and anxious to carry their Cape Breton enterprise on to Quebec, and the expedition which had been intended to sail in 1746 had only been postponed, and might have been despatched if the war had continued, without the possibility of opposition by sea on the part of France, whose own counter-attack under d'Anville had failed so lamentably. The restitution of Louisbourg was therefore of immediate importance to France if she valued her colonial empire. It was open to her to bargain for it by evacuating Flanders, or to retain Flanders and hope for later opportunities of regaining it in the manner anticipated by the British. This would mean another continental campaign to obtain the necessary ascendancy in Europe, and a peace which would be no peace, but an armed truce only. France, therefore, chose to surrender her conquests in Europe in order to retain her oversea possessions.

From our point of view, the easiest solution no doubt seemed to abandon Louisbourg in order to buy back Flanders, but the effect of this treatment of the fruits of colonial enterprise upon the people of North

America must not be lost sight of; for this, too, is an element in strategy. Louisbourg had been won by the efforts and arms of the North American colonists, and they felt most bitterly the action of the Home Government in not consulting them before disposing of it. This feeling is reflected strongly in the Boston newspapers of the day; and the Ministry, by thus ignoring the opinions of the colonists as to the disposition of a conquest made by themselves and affecting them so closely, only sowed the seeds of future disaffection in America.

The effect of the purely naval war upon commerce in bringing France to a peace is difficult to assess. Sir Peter Warren expressed the belief that although her manufacturers were in a sad way when peace was concluded, France was not beaten to a peace, so long as she could feed her army; and he recalled a saying of Louis XIV's, made towards the end of the war in Queen Anne's time, to the effect that so long as his magazines were full and his troops provided, the fact that the people were starving would not matter, since the regiments would be more easily recruited, 'for the people will 'list because they can get bread no where else.' [1] Horace Walpole declared that France was not seriously distressed by it and could long have continued fighting, and that the real reasons for the peace were the pacific sentiments of Louis XV, influenced by the teaching of Fleury. Others, as accurate as Walpole, stated that the internal state of France produced by the stoppage of imports and exports was deplorable; that manufactories were closed down for want of essential raw materials, that money was short and people were starving,

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, xiv. 470, Feb. 5, 1750.

and that this distress was an essential factor in bringing about the peace. The truth probably lies between the two, omitting the benevolence ascribed to the King, a benevolence which did not show itself until a bloody war had wasted Europe, drained French wealth, and threatened to deprive her of her most important and valuable colonies.

Thus it would seem that both schools of strategy were partly right in their views, but not wholly right in their reasons for holding them, as judged by the eventual turn of affairs. The advocates of the continental campaign were right because without the troops on the Continent our allies and ourselves would have been beaten in detail; not wholly right because the troops we could spare were unable to do what was required and save Flanders. The mercantile or maritime school were right in believing that the distresses of a maritime and colonial war would prove burdensome to the enemy and place the commerce of the world in British hands; but not right in supposing that the continental allies could, even if they would, furnish troops enough to defend our interests and their own on the Continent, nor in thinking that by taking a purely naval part in the war we could be a decisive factor.

Both schools made the mistake, made more than once since 1741, in thinking in terms of one service at a time; as though the army and navy were two separate organisations, and not two bodies working in an harmonious combination. Each wished to conduct offensive operations; but our resources were not sufficient to enable us to conduct adequate operations in two theatres at the same time, even if such strategy

were elementarily sound. The advocates of the continental strategy thought only in terms of driving the enemy from Flanders, pushing him back in Germany, and invading France. Those of the maritime policy saw only the capture of the enemy's trade and colonies and the increased wealth brought to the nation thereby. As matters turned out, each service produced, in ultimate effect though entirely without settled intentions, exactly the opposite of what the respective protagonists of the disconnected scheme of war intended. The colonial and naval conquests drove the enemy out of Flanders; the army assured the continuance of our maritime preponderance. The Duke of Newcastle is not infrequently described as a stupid person; but there is much shrewdness and appositeness in his expression of opinion as to respective limitations and functions of the naval and military forces. 'Naval force,' said he, 'tho' carried never so high, unsupported with even the *appearance* of a force upon the Continent, will be of little use. . . . France will outdo us at sea when they have nothing to fear by land. . . . I have always maintained that our marine should protect our alliances upon the Continent; and they, by diverting the expense, enable us to maintain our superiority at sea.' [1]

The result of the war is well known; after eight years of fighting on land and sea, Prussia alone, whose dishonourable violation of her word gave the first impetus to the war and furnished her own successes, retained her conquests. The boundaries of the other nations returned to practically their previous limits; the imperial crown remained in the House of Habsburg.

[1] Duke of Newcastle to Lord Hardwicke, Sept. 2, 1749, *Life of Lord Hardwicke*, Yorke, ii. 23.

Bête comme le paix, the French saying of the day, was a bitter comment on a peace which gave so little in return for the successful campaigns in Europe. Looking back now on those years of wasted life and money, it seems that the more appropriate purpose would have been *Bête comme la guerre*.

THE INFLUENCE OF SEA-POWER ON THE STRUGGLE WITH FRANCE IN NORTH AMERICA AND INDIA, 1744–1762[1]

SEA-POWER, in the words of Mahan, embraces all that tends to make a people great upon or by the sea. Although its most obvious manifestation and its most essential factor is a fighting navy, sea-power is the outcome of several elements. A favourable geographical situation, an aptitude for colonisation, and still more for trade, play important parts. No great sea Power has ever existed which has not at the same time been a great sea-trader. Sea-borne trade is indeed the prime foundation of sea-power, which grows and dies with it. British merchants and statesmen have well recognised this in the past. One of the reasons put forward by British merchants in 1589 for a licence to trade in the East Indies was that such a trade would add to the shipping, seamen, and naval force of the kingdom, as they saw it had increased the fleet of Portugal; and in the seventeenth century Sir Charles Davenant, in urging the importance of this same Eastern trade, said that if we should lose it we should lose at the same time our dominion of the sea, for only by the wealth derived from foreign trade could a great fleet be maintained. Indeed, the source of greatness, the roots out of which

[1] A lecture at London University, April 1920.

our ancient naval strength sprang, as well as the means by which it acted, lay in the merchant fleets which furnished the wealth for building ships and paying men, the seamen to supply the fighting ships, the transports which carried our troops all over the world. Not only this, but sea-power, Admiral Vernon pointed out in 1749, was the source of riches which were the chief support of the leagues and confederacies in the time of Charles II, William III, and Anne, which curbed the ambitions of France and brought the French monarchy very near to its ruin. As the strength of Spain depended upon her revenues, brought by her mercantile fleets, which she used to maintain her armies or corrupt ambassadors in the Courts of rival sovereigns; and as the Dutch republics were sustained in their long struggle by their maritime strength, so did England's strength rest upon her commerce, and her commerce upon the protection of the navy. The two were interdependent; neither could long exist without the other.

As commerce expanded, trading stations sprang up, and out of these trading stations grew some of our colonies. While, as I hope to show, the security of these scattered settlements depended upon the navy, so also did the navy depend upon the settlements. For a ship is not self-supporting; she needs places to refresh, she needs replacement of her supplies, secure harbours in which she can refit. These we call bases. And as from mere settlements these trading ports expanded into colonies, so they contributed in another way to increase our sea-power, for the colonies developed a trade of their own and a seafaring population; in the words of a Governor of Massachusetts in 1745, they served as 'nurseries' for seamen.

So long as settlements or colonies are thinly populated, the number of men capable of bearing arms limited, the internal communications undeveloped, and the resources centred in a few defended places, they are at the mercy of a comparatively small military force. Those colonies, therefore, which could increase their military force readily and with certainty, possessed the powers of defence and conquest. The only source from which such increase of military force could be drawn was the home country. To be able to arrive in the area under dispute, this military force must first cross the sea, and subsequently it must be fed, provisioned, and kept supplied with all materials and reinforcements by way of the ocean. As the roots of power rest in the home countries, the line of communication by sea between the home countries and the colony must be secure. The sea-power furnishes this security, and because Great Britain was strong in her power at sea, she was able, when the armed struggle with France seriously began, to maintain stronger military forces in the fields where they were needed.

The real armed struggle lasted only eighteen years —from 1744 to 1762. Sea-power in that short time decided whether England or France should dominate in America and India. But sea-power had also played a part in preparing the scene. It was owing to it, in its element of trade, that England was in a strong position in both hemispheres. A pacific rivalry had been at work in India ever since the French East India Company set up its first factory in India. The earlier entry of the British into the East Indian trade, the greater freedom of their commerce from interference by Government, and its consequent greater volume, contributed in a

marked degree towards consolidating Britain's strength and fitting her for the later struggle. Her great volume of shipping and her many settlements gave her an advantage over France, and all of this was the outcome of the trading instinct. In America, although conflicts had already taken place between the English and the French in 1690, 1691, 1709, and 1711, these early struggles did not extend beyond small campaigns of a local and indecisive character. Tactical successes and failures befell British arms, but nothing of a decisive nature occurred. Some areas changed hands, but as the great weight of sea-power had not been brought into play, the results were merely of the local nature following the collisions between small local forces.

In the years immediately preceding the declaration of war, 1744, the rivalry between France and Britain was beginning to change its form from one of a commercial to one of a political and military nature. In America, French intentions to push down the Ohio were already visible; in India, that remarkable man Dupleix, raised to the head of the French Company in 1741, was planning the expulsion of the British from the Coromandel coast; while at the same time the sea-commander in the East, de Labourdonnais, foreseeing that an armed struggle was inevitable, had asked for a strong squadron to sweep the British from the Indian Ocean. His request had been refused, and as a result when war was declared France was unready in the Indian Ocean.

Measured in the three terms of men-of-war, merchant ships, and local bases of supply, how did England and France compare at the beginning of their eighteen years' struggle? The British navy was more than double

that of France; and while France had Spain as ally, which brought her naval force nearly equal to ours, Britain had the help of a small Dutch squadron of ten ships, and this gave the British fleet a slight numerical superiority. But she had also a great advantage in a unified command of her fighting forces at sea.

The British merchant fleet, and the personnel which manned it, were vastly superior in numbers to those of the French—according to one contemporary writer by no fewer than six and ten times respectively. Of stations abroad Britain possessed shipping ports in the North American colonies at New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Portsmouth, Salem, Marblehead, Cape Ann, Ipswich, and Newbury, to which some 1400 vessels entered annually; while France had only Cape Breton with an average entry of about 150 ships, and Quebec, far up the St. Lawrence, and of small value as a base of operations.

In India the balance was more even. Britain had excellent ports at Bombay and Calcutta; minor, but defended, ports at Madras and Cuddalore on the Coromandel coast. France held Pondicherry, which was well fortified, and lesser ports at Karikal, Mahé, and Chandernagore; Mauritius, her principal naval base, built up by the energy of Labourdonnais, was over two thousand miles to the southward, and though distant was a factor of first-rate importance as a secure supply base for a campaign on the coast of India. In point of time, the real test of distance, it was not much farther from the vital area—the Coromandel coast—than Bombay, the only docking and repairing station of the British.

Thus, both in the East and West, in all the elements

of sea-power Great Britain was the stronger. Strength breeds strength; for as her numerous mercantile marine could stand greater losses than that of her enemy, so also in her fighting navy she could afford to take greater risks—a condition which encourages an offensive spirit, not only in the strategy but also in the conduct of individual commanders. The weakness of the French navy resulted in a defensive policy, and instructions to the French commanders were only too often marked by directions to avoid the risk of losses—directions bound to induce caution and cripple the activities of a fighting force. It must not be imagined that there was any lack of courage or conduct on the part of the French commanders; their skill and gallantry were pre-eminent, but they were dogged and fettered by the results of the policy of their rulers, which subordinated the navy to the army, and led the army into vast continental adventures, and France down the path which conducted her to revolution and her fall.

The French army numbered some 300,000 men, that of Britain a bare 29,000. But while France was thus stronger in a campaign on the Continent of Europe, this great army was useless to her for a struggle in America and Asia so long as her sea-power was not capable of carrying it to either of those continents. In spite, thus, of the apparent great strength of France, if she had had to fight a duel pure and simple with England for the possession of the colonies, I doubt whether in any contest of a like magnitude and significance two less evenly marked Powers would ever have faced each other.

But the struggle which began in 1744, although it formed the beginning of the contest between England

and France for colonial dominion, did not start with that object in view. Both countries were always engaged on opposite sides as auxiliaries in a continental war; and a considerable part of Britain's naval strength was absorbed in the contest into which she was drawn by the policy of the Balance of Power. There was at that time a great difference of opinion on the question as to whether we should direct our national strength towards colonial and maritime war or towards the maintenance of power in Europe. 'I think,' said Admiral Vernon, 'as our trade and navigation are of more consequence to us than even that which is called the Balance of Power in Europe, and while in this we are superior to France, we might preserve our independency even though she were mistress of the whole Continent of Europe . . . the Balance of Power . . . may more probably be overturned by the French improvements in their commerce and colonies than of their making conquests upon the Continent.' War, in fact, in the opinion of those who thought with Vernon—and these were many—should be directed towards extending our colonies and trade, and expelling the French from theirs; so only could our naval power be used to the greatest advantage of the nation. In spite of the strong support this view received in the first round of our struggles, which lasted from 1744 to 1748, the issue of the colonies was not made the predominating issue. This was the Balance of Power. Nevertheless the beginning of colonial expansion was made in spite of the continental preoccupation.

The policy of France was even more drawn away from the sea than the British. The French navy, which under Tourville had equalled that of Britain, had been

permitted to decline. Louis XIV had preferred the military and continental policy of Louvois to the commercial and maritime policy of Colbert; great military glory and some addition of territory had followed; but profound national distress had also resulted. His grandson had been equally absorbed in the land. Choiseul, one of the ablest Ministers of France, had pressed for a strong navy, but his views were ridiculed by Louis XV. 'My dear Choiseul, you are as mad as your predecessors,' said the King; 'they have all told me they want a navy. There will never be any other navies in France than those of Vernet the artist.'

Thus the French navy had been starved; at the same time her commerce was obstructed by Court and bureaucratic influences. Commercial development, originally rapid, had been checked, while all the efforts to redeem it by means of Government loans, subsidies, and official control were worse than unavailing to restore this source of sea-power to a healthy condition.

The great continental struggle absorbed much of Britain's naval strength, owing to the need of preventing France and Spain from using the sea for the passage of their troops across the Gulf of Lyons from Antibes and Barcelona into Italy. The defence of the United Kingdom, disturbed by Jacobite disaffection, twice threatened with French invasion, in 1744 and 1745, made further demands upon our strength; but our navy was sufficiently strong to spare force for the outer seas, and small squadrons were maintained in North America, the East and West Indies, and on the coast of Africa.

The North American colonists saw their opportunity in France's difficulty. Long had they watched the aggressive character of French policy in Canada, and

their trade, early in the war, had suffered at the hands of the French privateers. The first, the most obvious step, towards the ejection of the French from Canada was to cripple the French resources at sea and secure that position from which French maritime operations must be conducted, the fortress of Louisbourg. Louisbourg, situated on the ocean, was well placed for our enemies to raid our American coastal trade; but, more important still, it stood at the gate of the St. Lawrence, the natural highway into the heart of Canada, and no military expedition could travel up that waterway so long as an active fighting squadron could bar the road and cut into the communications of the army. Without such a squadron Louisbourg was nothing—a sentry-box without a sentry; but with one, Louisbourg furnished the necessary sally-port for contesting the passage of any enemy force up the river. A blockade of the port might stop large squadrons from operating freely, but the egress and ingress of single ships could never be assured against, for no blockade in history has been able wholly to bottle up a harbour. The sole effective measure was capture.

The war, in so far as it related to Canada, hinged upon the possession of Louisbourg. The colonists prepared an expedition of four thousand volunteers at Boston; and a British squadron under an admirable commodore, Peter Warren, hastened from the West Indies, blockaded the port, assured the safe transport of the little army, and co-operated in the siege. Louisbourg fell in June 1745.

While this opening round was being brought to a brilliantly successful end in America, a British squadron under an able officer, Commodore Barnett, had sailed

for India, where, owing to the French refusal of Labourdonnais's request for a fighting force, he found himself at once in complete command of the sea. French trade—that source of strength in war, that foundation of influence in the East—disappeared. But sea-power, great as are its effects, has its limitations. Barnett had no troops. Unprovided with military force with which to break down the opposition of native princes and to conduct operations against the well-defended French stations, he was unable to obtain the full benefit which sea-power was capable of conferring; without troops he could not sweep the French from their settlements. The arrival, after two years of war, of a strong French squadron under Labourdonnais put a new complexion on affairs on the Coromandel coast. Barnett had then died, and had been succeeded by an irresolute officer, whom Labourdonnais drove from the coast. Local command at sea passed into the hands of the French, who promptly made use of it to carry a military expedition by sea to Madras, which was tamely surrendered by its Governor after a trifling defence.

The loss of Louisbourg by France, and of Madras by England, were of too great importance to be borne by either Power without efforts to regain them. The capacity to make the efforts with any prospects of success depended upon sea-power. To recover Louisbourg, France, in 1746, prepared a strong expedition, escorted by a powerful squadron under the Duc d'Anville. But at the same time as she was making this preparation, Britain was taking steps to exploit her own success, and was getting ready another army to conquer Canada. But the uncertainty as to the destination of the French expedition, which might be aimed at England, Ireland,

the Mediterranean, or America, detained the British expedition in home waters until it was too late in the year to sail. Evading the inadequate British squadron in the Bay, d'Anville crossed the Atlantic; but he only reached Nova Scotia in such a condition of shattered ships manned by scurvy-stricken men, that, after burying its dead, including its commander, the fleet crept home again to France, narrowly escaping complete destruction at the hands of Admiral Anson, who was watching off Brest for its return. That element of sea-power consisting in efficient seamen, well-organised supplies, and good sea-hygiene was lacking, and was the cause of the utter failure of this attempt to defend Canada.

In India reinforcements for the British squadron had been quickly dispatched when the alarming news of the loss of Madras was received. Command was re-established without a battle, for the French admiral, after quarrelling with his military colleague, had abandoned the coast. Once more the blighting British blockade was imposed on French commerce, which suffered oblivion, while French prestige, so important in the East, was eclipsed.

Still France could not abandon hopes of restoring her position in the East and West, and she made two more efforts to do so. In May and October 1747 she prepared fleets with troops, money, and supplies for Canada and India. Each was intercepted, the former by Anson, the latter by Hawke, off Finisterre. Cruising with greatly superior squadrons upon the line of passage, these admirals fell upon the French. The convoys, stubbornly defended by De la Jonquière and De l'Etanduère, escaped; but the escorting men-of-war were captured. The noble courage and tenacity of the French

crews, fighting against heavy odds, leave no doubt of what France was capable of at sea had her sea-power been stronger.

But while the French were thus unable to send expeditions across the oceans, the British, thanks to sea-power, could do so. An expedition under Admiral Boscawen, with an escort of men-of-war and East Indiamen, sailed at the end of 1747 for India to capture the two main seats of French strength, Mauritius and Pondicherry. The object was not to recover Madras, but to destroy French power—Madras would then be recovered as the result. But Mauritius appeared, and Pondicherry proved, too strong. The difficulties of the military operations had been underrated, the troops were too few, the engineers too incapable, and war came to an end before the attempt could be renewed.

This, the first of the two decisive wars, ended in 1748. The French had conquered Flanders, and then stood in a position to invade and conquer Holland; Italy had barely been saved from the Bourbon armies. But, notwithstanding her proud conquests on land, France was glad to make peace. Her trade was ruined, her manufactories stood idle, her people were starving, and the key to her greatest colonial possession was in the hands of Britain to use as she chose when next a quarrel should break out. So great was the importance of Louisbourg, taken by the little sea-carried expedition of colonial volunteers, that in order to recover it France evacuated Flanders, the prize for which her king so greatly hungered, in the conquest of which he had made such immense sacrifices; Madras was returned to England.

Thus after four years of war no territorial change

overseas took place. But it would be an error to draw from this the conclusion that no progress had been made towards the British conquest of America and India. The sea-power of France had been shattered to its foundations; her navy, weak before the war, had lost half its ships of the line, and its spirit had been deeply injured; her merchant fleet had lost over a thousand ships, her trading companies were ruined. The French East India Company, deeply in debt, and now subsisting solely on grants in aid, lotteries, privilege, and tobacco monopolies, was tottering to its ruin. 'Any plan,' says Sir Alfred Lyall, in his admirable sketch of the progress of British dominion in India, 'of establishing the territorial supremacy in India of a maritime European Power must be fundamentally defective, must necessarily suffer a dangerous constitutional weakness, so long as it does not rest upon a secure line of communications at sea.' The first round of this struggle resulted in weakening the security of the French line of communications by the destruction of so great a part of her fighting fleet and the heavy losses of her trade.

The peace was followed by a seven years' truce, marked by developments of the political contests in India and of the expansion policy of France in America. In the East the disturbance to trade and the tension produced by Dupleix's political activities led to his recall. In America, disputes concerning frontiers brought about collisions between the colonial levies and the French, culminating in war.

The second phase of the struggle had now begun. Seven years of truce had made some improvement in French sea-power. Trade had revived; her navy had

increased from the miserable remnant of 1748; but the British navy was still about double the numerical strength of that of France in ships of all classes, and its actual superiority was greater still. The experience of the earlier war had brought about a clearer appreciation of strategical principles, and the sieve of active operations had sifted out the commanders. These two results were the equivalent of many ships of the line. Not only was the instrument good, but there were men who knew how to wield it.

Although the quarrel between England and France was on this occasion of a purely colonial nature, we were not free to throw our whole weight into the struggle, for policy was complicated by European disturbances. The ripening of the colonial dispute was simultaneous with the ripening of Austria's desire to recover Silesia.

Matters came to a head in America, where a small force under Colonel George Washington had surrendered at Fort Duquesne. Clearly, the first step both Powers must take was to increase their military forces in America and, if possible, prevent their enemies from doing so. A British reinforcement of four hundred men under Braddock sailed early in 1755, and a British squadron put to sea to prevent the far greater French reinforcements of three thousand men from landing anywhere on the American continent. Besides this, Hawke cruised in the Bay of Biscay to strike a direct blow at two sources of French sea-power—her trade and her seamen.

Notwithstanding our strength at sea, our efforts miscarried. Unfortunate events succeeded each other in a bewildering manner. Braddock was defeated. The French Armada reached Canada with a loss of only two ships, evading Boscawen, who was sent out to

intercept the expedition; and, having fulfilled its function, returned to France, not only passing Boscawen's blockading squadron off the St. Lawrence, but also evading Hawke's off Brest. Montcalm, later to lose his life, slipped out of Brest with a squadron and a thousand more troops, and by the capture of Oswego gained command of the Great Lakes, so important in any operations in Canada. Sea-power had failed in its object; the French, stronger than the British in Canada, were everywhere victorious. Nor was this all. In India Calcutta was taken by Siraj-ud-Daulah, and all the British forts and factories in Bengal were lost; while in Europe, by a feint at invasion in the Channel, a French army captured our principal Mediterranean base, Minorca. Such was the serious position at the end of 1756, when a continental war broke out in Europe and Frederick of Prussia called on Britain for naval help in the Baltic.

The vital spot for England lay in America. There was one way, and one only, for retrieving the situation, and that was to establish military superiority in Canada, and to do so was only possible by the possession of naval superiority which should enable the army to cross the sea. Twelve thousand troops, escorted by fifteen ships of the line, sailed to Halifax to conquer Canada, in which the first operation was to be the recapture of the key position of Louisbourg. But French sea-power intervened, and when the army was about to leave Halifax it was found that a French fleet of nineteen ships, some coming from Brest and some from Toulon, was standing in the path at Louisbourg, a threat to the passage of the army by sea. The expedition was held up; while at the same time Montcalm was pressing his advantages

on land and French forces were threatening the route to New York. But British sea-power was to come to its own. Stronger measures for controlling the ocean routes were adopted. To prevent further reinforcements of ships of war from France a closer watch was established in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, where expeditions were preparing, and the squadron, now under Boscawen, in Canada, was strengthened. Osborn, off Carthagena, struck at the Toulon squadron and stopped the sailing of the reinforcements under De la Clue; Hawke broke up another fleet in the Aix roads. The French commander whose squadron had checked the expedition from Halifax failed to profit by the opportunity afforded by his temporary superiority, and returned to France.

With superiority at sea thus established the British expedition sailed and appeared off Louisbourg—an army of twelve thousand men, a fleet with as many more, to which the garrison could oppose only some seven thousand troops and crews of ships combined. For the second time Louisbourg fell. Cut off from all support by the British squadrons in the Bay of Biscay, at Gibraltar, and off its own entrance, attacked by a vastly superior force under a general of commanding ability, Amherst, supported by an admiral of the finest temper and quality, Boscawen, it surrendered, and the way into Canada—a difficult way of intricate navigation, only to be mastered by supreme seamanship—was open.

The route could not be used at once. The operations had been much delayed by the French squadron at Louisbourg, and the season was now late; while the defeat at Ticonderoga gave rise to anxiety in New York. Thus the French sea-power, though it had not prevented

the loss of Louisbourg, had deferred the attack upon Quebec for a year. But the French situation was now critical, and the loss of Canada appeared inevitable in the next year unless succour could arrive or a decision be obtained in Europe which should bring about peace. A counter-stroke at England might save Canada. While Britain must divide her forces to cover so many points, it might be possible for France to concentrate so superior a force in the Channel that an army could be carried into England. But the well-planned scheme was brought to nothing. The concentration was defeated by Boscawen, who intercepted the French division coming from Toulon and destroyed it off Lagos; and, later, the Brest division was destroyed by Hawke in that most glorious and inspiring November battle in Quiberon Bay, two months after Quebec had surrendered.

But Canada was not yet won: indeed, Quebec was nearly lost again in the winter, when, cut off from the sea, its captors were beleaguered by the French army. But the breaking of the ice brought store ships and relief to the British garrison, and the last hope of France, a fleet of store ships for her own armies, was intercepted and captured by the British squadrons. Then, with ample sea resources on the oceans and the lakes, the British military forces overcame the last resistance, and Canada passed into British hands.

While the fate of the Western Continent was being decided in this mighty drama, events on a far smaller scale, but of not less significance, were taking place in India. Here the opposing white forces were of approximately equal strength—some two thousand men—but the French, as a result of their political activity, disposed of a greater native army. They held far more territory

than the British, and their political influence, revived by the successful defence of Pondicherry and the intrigues of Dupleix, was greater than the British. But while they possessed these advantages on land, they were inferior at sea. A British squadron under Admiral Charles Watson was in East Indian waters; the British East India Company was flourishing; the French company, notwithstanding—or indeed more probably in consequence of—its subsidies and aids, was on the brink of insolvency. Thus, though superficially France might appear the stronger, war had only to break out to show the fictitious character of this local strength.

France was not unaware of the need of naval strength in India, and intended to send a squadron thither in 1755; but the British threats against Louisbourg tied her naval forces to the Atlantic for over two years. The respite was valuable; it gave freedom to Watson to carry an expedition, commanded by Clive, to Calcutta —the expedition which avenged the tragedy of the Black Hole, captured Chandernagore from the French and expelled them from the province, crushed the Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah on the field of Plassey, and made the British masters of Bengal. Sea-power was the talisman without which these striking successes would not have been obtained.

The French, however, were still capable of acting on land: the British settlements on the Coromandel coast were attacked in the interval of the absence of the British fleet by French forces from Hyderabad. Masulipatam was taken, and the region of the Northern Circars passed under French control. So far, honours were divided. The British had Bengal; the French Orissa. But now a French squadron under M. d'Aché arrived

on the coast, superior in numbers to the British. Watson died and was succeeded in command by Sir George Pocock, between whom and d'Aché a series of tough, though indecisive, engagements of far-reaching importance was fought. D'Aché brought with him a reinforcement of troops, which he landed at Pondicherry. Pocock hastened to meet him, and, though inferior in force, engaged him; severely damaged, Pocock dropped to leeward to refit, and in his absence Lally Tollendal, the new French commander on land, attacked and took Fort St. David. The capture of Fort St. David was the result of French sea-power. The troops which took it had been brought out from France by sea, evading both the blockade off Brest and an attempt to intercept them in India.

Pocock clearly saw that the land campaign depended upon supplies, that supplies came only by sea, and that the protection to these was afforded by the French squadron and nothing else. He therefore clung to d'Aché. He waited off his port to fight him if he came out, fought him when he did come out, boldly seized a French anchorage at Karikal for a base in order to keep close to his enemy and miss no opportunity of bringing him to a decisive action. D'Aché, hammered by this dogged admiral, anxious about his supplies as his communications were insecure, gave up the contest, abandoned the coast, and retired to Mauritius. The reward for Pocock's persistence followed immediately. Lally, who had projected an attack upon Madras in conjunction with the squadron, without which it could not be made, was obliged to give up the attempt. He did, indeed, when the north-east monsoon had driven Pocock to Bombay in the winter of 1758, carry an

expedition to Madras; but while the French fell short of money, men, and munitions, which they could only obtain from sea, the British garrison received relief and reinforcements by a squadron under Captain Kempenfelt. In consequence, Lally was forced to raise the siege and Madras was saved. French prestige, already suffering owing to the departure of De Bussy from Hyderabad to assist in these coastal operations, was seriously crippled.

While sea-power was thus influencing the actual operations in this manner, the transcendent effect upon policy is not less obvious. De Bussy and Lally each had his views as to the proper method of conquering India. According to De Bussy the secret lay in alliances with native princes; for Lally it lay in military concentration against each vulnerable British post in succession. Each plan was good, but the success of both of them depended on command of the sea. Native alliances would follow surely enough after military victories and commercial strength; military victories would result from military superiority; but neither military nor commercial superiority would be procured without naval superiority. So long as Britain could carry her troops from London to Cuddalore, from Cuddalore to Calcutta or wherever she wished, while France could not, her victory, so long as her heart was in the contest, was certain. Clive's clear mind saw this. Writing to Pitt in January 1759, he said: 'Notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts made by the French in sending out M. Lally with a considerable force the last year, I am confident before the end of this they will be near their last gasp in the Carnatic unless some very unforeseen event interposes in their favour. The superiority of

our squadron and the plenty of money and supplies of all kinds which our friends on the coast will be furnished with from this province [Bengal], while the enemy are in total want of everything, without any visible means of redress—an advantage as, if properly attended to, cannot fail of wholly effecting their ruin in that as well as in every other part of India.' Clive's actions were by no means behind his words. He sent an expedition down to the Northern Circars, swept the French from the province, retook Masulipatam, and so deprived the French of a source of supply of the highest importance in their straitened circumstances.

The French need for supplies was indeed great; Pondicherry, in great distress, received some help by sea. D'Aché, leaving Mauritius with a squadron of eleven sail, appeared once more on the coast in August 1759. Pocock, who had nine sail only, met him and attacked without hesitation. In spite of d'Aché's superiority—the engagement was fought between eleven French and seven British, as two of the latter could not get into action—he did not make an attempt to bring matters to a conclusion. He seems to have been overwhelmed by the thought of what would happen if he were beaten, and to be intent upon preserving a fleet the loss of which would have spelt the loss of India. He left the British undefeated, threw some supplies into Pondicherry, and retired to the islands.

And now, by virtue of command of the sea, Sir Eyre Coote arrived from England with more troops. A new campaign began on land. In January the French and their native allies were totally defeated at Wandiwash, De Bussy himself was made a prisoner, and the remaining French positions on the coast, except Pondicherry,

were taken. This place was too strong to assault, and Coote sat down before it on land while Admiral Steevens, who had succeeded Pocock in command, blockaded it by sea. Grimly the French defended the isolated place, sustained in their resistance by the hope of one thing only—relief by sea. Their eyes swept the horizon each day for the topsails of d'Aché's squadron. The summer passed by ; the monsoon broke in October. In ordinary times no ships could lie on that lee shore in the tempestuous north-east monsoon, and there were hopes that the British squadron would be obliged to retire and reliefs might run in. But the tenacious Steevens defied the weather and held on, cutting off all supplies from the neighbouring local ports. D'Aché never came. He was detained at Mauritius by an order to defend the island, an order based upon a report that Pitt was preparing to attack it—a threat rendered effectual by the possession of sea-power. Pondicherry, starved out, surrendered ; and from the date of its fall we may count the end of the struggle between England and France for India ; for though in later wars the navies of the two countries were to fight some of the most severely contested actions in our annals, British power was by then so firmly rooted in India that no local successes could overthrow it.

Although in this outline attention has principally been directed towards the local operations in America and India, the pivot upon which everything rested was the fleets in European waters. Such is the character of war at sea that the battles of 1747 to 1759 off Finisterre, Lagos, and Quiberon Bay were the deciding factors. The destruction of the fighting fleet of France in these battles so reduced the military power of France at

sea that she could never obtain such a measure of command as would permit her to make a free use of the sea; nor could she protect her trade, the greater part of which concentrated in her Atlantic ports. The names of the men who commanded those fleets are well known—Anson, Hawke, and Boscawen—though the far-reaching results of their actions are often obscured. Less known are the men who played so vital a part at sea in the other oceans. The names of Wolfe and Clive are familiar to every schoolboy; but the naval men, without whose actions Quebec would not have been won or Bengal captured, are to all intents and purposes unknown—Peter Warren, Charles Watson, Saunders, Pocock, Steevens, Cornish, and others. Even at sea they have received no recognition. Among our fighting ships to-day we have a *Seraph* but no *Saunders* or *Steevens*, a *Waterhen* but no *Warren* or *Watson*, a *Patrician* but no *Pocock*. The arresting character of the military operations has filled the historical picture. The surrender of Washington to Duquesne, Braddock's defeat, the relief of Arcot, the loss of Madras, the Battle of Plassey, the capture of the heights of Abraham, absorb the attention and make people oblivious to the vital part played by sea-power in the struggle. Speculation as to what might have been is only too commonly a barren mental gymnastic, but in this case it may serve to bring home to us how great the influence of sea-power was, if we try to imagine what the result would have been if the ideas of Colbert had governed the policy of France and the spirit of Suffren her doctrine of sea-fighting. A great mercantile marine would have arisen untrammelled by Court and Government interference, and resting upon the security of a powerful navy imbued with a true

military spirit; these would have furnished the support she needed for her oversea possessions. Had these great principles been allied to the genius of the French people and sustained by wealth undrained by European wars, we may permissibly doubt whether the Union flag would now float over Canada and Hindustan. Not all the statesmanship and generalship of Clive, Stringer Lawrence, and Eyre Coote could have prevailed if a French navy had commanded the exits to the Channel and the approaches to the St. Lawrence and the Hoogli. Instead of Lally gazing despairingly to sea from besieged Pondicherry, Clive might have been watching vainly from Calcutta; instead of Quebec falling to Wolfe's gallant army, Montcalm might have marched victoriously to New York. The French flag, either tricolour or white with golden lilies—for who can tell how far-reaching the results of commercial prosperity in producing a contented nation might be?—might to-day be saluted by four hundred millions of people. So true it is, as a Frenchman has said, that the Trident of Neptune is the Sceptre of the World.

CO-OPERATION [1]

While it is hardly necessary to repeat the platitude that co-operation is one of the great principles of war, just as it is of all human activities, it is permissible to remind ourselves that while no principle is more freely accepted in theory, or receives more liberally the tribute of lip-service, none is more constantly neglected in practice in every phase of war, from Grand Strategy to Tactics. Everyone knows co-operation to be essential; yet for all that the history of every war is a record of failure to co-operate. Either allies fail to co-operate—is not the weakness of coalitions almost an axiom?—or continental Powers fail to co-operate with maritime Powers; or fleets to co-operate with armies; or armies with fleets; or fleets with fleets, or armies with armies. It is indeed remarkable—though it would not be surprising if human nature with its innate selfishness, shortness of vision, and mental indolence were taken into account—that the history of war contains a long record of the employment of fighting forces in a sectional manner.

The need for obtaining some improvement in this matter, so far as co-operation between the fighting services is concerned, has lately been very prominent, and several cures, or prophylactics, have been suggested, among which the more prominent are a Ministry of

[1] A lecture delivered at the Royal United Service Institution, Feb. 20, 1923.

Defence, a Minister of Defence, and a Combined Staff. These have been very fully discussed and I do not propose to make any study of them to-day. What I wish to do is to make some examination of the scope of the problem. I do not think that mere assertions that there has been a lack of co-operation between the navy and army in considering the policy of the employment of arms, or that failures in the field have often resulted from lack of co-operation between the Admiral and General, are sufficiently definite; nor even that they are comprehensive and accurate. In fact, I am inclined to think that the most commonly quoted case, that of lack of co-operation of commanders in the field, is, in actual practice, one that has less often occurred, and has been of far less consequence in its results, than any of the others. But as it is generally easier and more popular to attribute failure to the officers than to other causes, so a facile means of accounting for failures is always at hand, and is readily accepted.

What, then, is the problem of co-operation? It is a problem in many stages. In the first, there is the fundamental question of the national system of defence, upon which depends the proportion of expenditure upon each of the services. We are called upon, and properly, to co-operate in allocating expenditure to the various services; and one of the proposed measures for doing this in the best way is the establishment of a Ministry, or Minister, of Defence who would examine the estimates of each service and give the 'proper' proportion to each. But the immediate question that presents itself is—upon what is his decision to be based? How is he to say what is the 'proper' proportion? For there are no fewer than three separate theories as to the

functions of the services and the manner in which a decision is to be reached in war. According to one of these, which has been promulgated recently, the function of the navy is to carry the army wherever it wishes to go. A second, echoing to some extent a phrase of Colonel G. F. R. Henderson in his 'Science of War,' defines the function of the army as being to assist the navy to obtain command of the sea. The former of these proceeds upon the assumption that the principal fighting service of the country, that by which wars are won, is the army. The second assumes that war, so far as we are concerned, will be won by the navy. And a third theory has recently flown—literally—into the arena, which assumes that war will be won by an air force, attacking the civil populations in what is called a 'War of Areas,' and that consequently the functions of army and navy either disappear or become ancillary to the new arm. And in the middle of all this run contradictions: certain practices are forbidden in one set of operations which form the whole basis of the other. For example, 'frightfulness,' expressly repudiated recently in the case of sea warfare, appears to be a fundamental principle in the air.

I state these theories—I have heard all of them warmly maintained—not for the purpose of discussing them, for that is not the subject of my paper, but to bring out a fact affecting co-operation. If there is no common policy, no accepted doctrine of the functions of the services or of the way this nation should make war, how is it practicable for co-operation to exist? If you put a cart down in an open field with several gates, and tell several men to co-operate in dragging it out of the field, you will not get much motion on

the cart until you have pointed out through which gate it is to be taken. If, then, co-operation is required, is not the first step towards obtaining it to be sought for in a clear definition of policy? This in turn depends upon a clear understanding of national interests.

If the great national interest be defined, the policy proper for its attainment will be suggested. 'Exclusiveness of purpose,' says Napoleon, 'is the secret of great successes and of great operations.' So, just as in all affairs of life one concentrates one's efforts upon attaining one's principal object, and subordinates lesser things to that attainment, the minor interests of the country should be, as they have been in earlier times, subordinated to the principal interest. National policy in all its manifestations receives its impulse from that main interest; and the 'services' that are developed —that is, the servants of policy—are adjusted in the way that best will lead to its attainment. I think no one can study the History of Foreign Policy without receiving the impression that our statesmen, at least those of our great periods, had always a clear-cut, definite view of the national interest definable within the compass of a few words: and that this afforded the guidance as to whether we should develop maritime or land power, and the amount of each.

Therefore, as a first step towards co-operation, let us be sure of the purpose. We are then able to think what form of weapon—army, navy or air force—is best adapted to attain it, and the degree to which the assistance of the other services is essential. What I am trying thus to express is possibly more easily illustrated by an example. Louis XIV had to consider whether the interest of France lay in controlling the affairs of the

Empire, increasing France's dominion in Europe, and supporting the Counter-Reformation; or in trade, colonies, and religious freedom. Louvois urged the former; Colbert the latter. For the one, armies were principally needed; for the other, sea-power. No nation can possess a superiority in both over rival land and sea Powers. Rightly or wrongly he chose the former, and built a fleet, powerful indeed, but secondary in importance to the armies. If Louis had made his choice differently and decided that the interests of France did not lie in domination in Europe, in breaking up the Empire, but in trade and colonies, he would have avoided aggression on the Continent and developed ships, navigation and sea-power.

The actual results of the policy followed by Louis and his successor and the possible results of the opposite policy emphasise the prodigiously far-reaching effects of policy. France gained great military glory, but was reduced to poverty and distress, from which she never fully recovered; and she lost her colonial empire. The opposite policy might have brought her wealth, prosperity and an empire oversea. Both Canada and India might now be hers. The French Revolution might never have occurred.

The person, then, who has the duty of adjusting the 'proper' proportion of expenditure upon each service must assuredly know what the policy of the country is. Is it regeneration of the so-called backward races? Is it protection of the down-trodden? Is it expansion of territory? Or is it security of employment for this people and their trade? Let this be made clear and co-operation between the three services becomes easier. Until it is done we cannot see the wood for trees. It is

useless to complain that the fighting services do not co-operate if no clear outstanding object is given them. In the past there is no question but that the national object was clear—the maintenance of maritime superiority. Both the external and internal policy were used to contribute to this, and the armaments of the kingdom were based upon the hypothesis that this being the foundation of our security and prosperity, its attainment must be our principal aim. We need a similar clear understanding to-day. I do not think it is possible to say that we possess it.

Next, there is the business of co-operation between allies. Although it is obvious that allies must have something in common to achieve—otherwise they would not have allied themselves together—yet the difficulty of getting them to work together is one of the commonplaces of the history of war. One is inclined, in reading history, to be impatient at the apparent perversity that makes the several parties to coalitions pull in different directions, both on land and sea. Yet it is not really perversity. It is that factor of self-defence that is elemental in human, and indeed in all, nature. It is evidently extraordinarily difficult for bodies of men to realise, until disaster stares them in the face, that their interest is a common one—the old word for it was the 'Common Cause.' The tendency to separate what are believed to be 'national' interests from 'common' interests appears irresistible. Putting aside minor motives of personal jealousies, of lukewarmness, of doubt as to whether advantage lies in supporting one side or the other, we have persistently recurrent examples of deliberate sectional action on the part of nominal allies. We see the Portuguese, when we have gone to

Lisbon with a fleet, in Leake's time, putting every difficulty in the way of its maintenance; the Dutch when furnishing a squadron to our fleet in 1744 in accordance with treaty stipulations, keeping its control in their own hands, short-provisioning it, and desiring to employ it for the defence of the coast of Holland. We see the Austrians and Sardinians in 1718, allied to eject the Spaniards from Sardinia and Sicily, but disagreeing so acutely between themselves as to whether Sardinian or Austrian territory should first be reconquered, that for nine months nothing at all was done for either; nor would anything have been done at all but for the intervention and representations of the British Admiral in the Mediterranean, who pointed out that even a bad plan was better than none. Marlborough's difficulties with the Dutch deputies, the failures of the several Coalitions between 1793 and 1814, the total failures of the French and Spanish fleets to work together in the three great wars of the eighteenth century, are all familiar. And yet, with all these examples behind us, their effects perfectly well known to us, can we honestly say we reached a stage of perfect co-operation in the late war? And, if not, why not? Apart from different conceptions of strategy, is this not primarily due to a mistaken idea that some national interest outweighs in importance the common interest —that the exclusion of the ally from some territory, the conquest of some particular and desired provinces, or the maintenance of some branch of national trade, is so essential a matter that nothing must prejudice it? Examples of all these will occur to you in the late war. Yet, in the long run, what is this except the old delusion that there is something more important than beating

the enemy, and neglect of Æsop's fable of the bundle of sticks? I have seen instructions in which a British Admiral, ordered to co-operate with a naval force of another nation, was specifically told that he must not do anything that was averse from his country's interests. The French Minister of Marine in 1915 approved the idea that France should husband her fleet. The British and German fleets would probably fight, and even the victor would suffer heavy losses. It was, therefore, to 'the interest of France' to keep an intact fleet, which could then step into the breach; and she would be able to appear at the peace-table in a relatively strong position. The supposed interest of the country, not the interest of the common cause, dominates this idea, just as it enters into the British instructions quoted earlier. The same idea is to be found in the Italian expressions 'sacro egoismo' and 'la *nostra* guerra.' None of these ideas is informed with the true spirit of co-operation. They are, I suggest, precise examples of what to avoid. They contain what lies at the bottom of all the failures to co-operate—the belief that the common cause is subordinate to the nation's interests. It was in such beliefs that the Spaniards, thinking of their nation's interests, sent their fleet to recover Gibraltar, instead of combining it with the French to destroy the British fleet: after which they could have had Gibraltar for the asking. The Austrians were thinking of their nation's interests in sending an army to capture Naples in 1742, instead of combining with the Piedmontese to destroy the Franco-Spanish armies. The Dutch were thinking of their own interests when they opposed Marlborough's designs. The only real interest in each and every case was the destruction of the enemy, and to achieve this they needed to devote

their efforts exclusively to the beating of the enemy—in complete co-operation.

But if this be so obvious it is none the less obvious that the difficulties of getting allies to act in accordance with a sound principle are permanent. We have noble examples of an opposite interpretation, none, I suppose, more so than Russia's advance into East Prussia in the early days of the war. But the examples of the opposite state of thought so far outnumber these that the practical question—and that is the only one that matters—is, Can this be minimised in the future? And how? Did not we learn a great deal about how to avoid sectional action in the course of the late war? Blockade measures, for instance, were not really co-ordinated until 1917, when we did at last discover methods of co-ordination. But it was not until three years after the outbreak of war that the Allied Blockade Committee was formed, which, with its branches in various ports, contributed so largely to bringing about the strict limitation of supplies to the enemy. An examination of our experience in this matter might indicate certain broad lines upon which to develop administrative machinery which can be set in motion sooner than three years after the outbreak of war. Should we, indeed, not aim at an effective employment of our instrument in co-operation with those of whoever may be our allies, early in the war, rather than towards its end? In fact, we should be able to begin the next war with measures based on the experience of the last, instead of having painfully to relearn it all.

Administrative machinery is not, however, the only thing. A correct mentality is equally or even more essential. We must have not only a recognition of the

necessity for co-operation, which most of us possess already in a platonic form, but also a realisation of the difficulty of attaining a full co-operation, which realisation will spur us to make the greatest possible efforts. While the former is common, the latter is not. It is not difficult to take steps, in their military training, that our officers of all three services should have their eyes opened to it; but it is not they only who have the ordering of things. The high direction of affairs in war is, and must be, in the hands of statesmen. Is it too much to hope that provision should be made whereby some of those who will have the direction of affairs in their hands shall have an opportunity of knowing how influential a part this international co-operation has always played in war? The military lectureships at Universities furnish an opportunity for doing this, for emphasising the influence of exclusiveness of purpose in war. But in so far as the fighting services are concerned we do know how we produced a certain measure of co-operation towards the end of the late war. We found, for example, that an organisation for centralising the discussion of strategy was necessary. We found measures for regulating command of allied forces necessary, both on land and at sea—and difficult it was. In fact, we rediscovered the truth of Raleigh's saying that 'The plurality of commanders in equal authority is for the most part occasion of slow proceeding in the war,' and produced some means overcoming the difficulties. The measures for setting on foot again, at the earliest period of a war, those methods of controlling strategy and vesting command, which were found practicable and sound, so as to avoid the 'plurality of commanders in equal authority'—strategical or

tactical—can be studied, kept on record, and made ready for proposing for adoption.

Passing from the co-operation of allies to that of armies and navies, I come down more closely to the soldier, sailor and airman. This co-operation extends from preparation and provision of instruments—navy, army and air—in their 'proper' proportions, to planning their use, to devising strategical and tactical combinations.

For the purpose of preparation, provision and planning, we need, as I said earlier, first of all an accepted definition of policy, of which war is the course of action by which the objects of policy are attained. But next to that is an accepted agreement as to what we mean by 'war.' One hears 'war' and 'naval war' spoken of; and, I suppose, 'aerial war' as well. Personally I dislike the expression 'naval war.' I like to think of war as one, not 'naval' war as though it were something distinct, some private bit of fighting at sea. There are the *operations* of war on land and the *operations* of war at sea, the whole making up 'war.' I am glad to notice that the title of the Naval Official History is 'Naval Operations' and not the 'Naval War.' What I would ask is, have we, as a whole, a clear picture as to how this country has made war throughout its modern history—that is, since it became a modern trading state under Cromwell? Military histories or naval histories are only too often—there are admirable exceptions—records of military or naval operations, dissociated from one another, written round only one part of the whole. What we need to be clear about is the means whereby we, this nation, set about employing those assets of strength we possess to force the enemy to desist from

the policy he was adopting. We are inclined to study the military campaigns, and the naval campaigns, but not the manner of making war—that is, utilising the forces naval, military, geographical, financial and commercial to 'compel the enemy to compliance.' What form did our national effort against Napoleon take from 1806 to 1812? We know there was a war in the Peninsula, various expeditions in different parts of the world, a fleet in the Bay of Biscay and another in the Mediterranean, squadrons in the Baltic. But do we look at the thing as a whole, ascertain what was the principal object of all these several operations, connect up the Milan and Berlin Decrees and the Orders in Council, with the invasion of Russia, the War in Spain, or the War with the United States in 1812? Some of us probably do this, but I am bound to say I was never taught to do so. The relation between them was hardly noticed. All these events were treated in watertight compartments. Unless the study of the wars of the past is made as a whole I venture to say we are not training ourselves to make real preparation for war, however much we may be preparing ourselves to conduct certain of the operations of war.

If we cast our eyes backwards to the period preceding the late war, can we trace there any signs that the impending war was studied as a whole? There were naval plans for the disposition of the main fleet, the distribution of cruisers on foreign stations, the distribution of coastal flotillas; and military plans for the movements of the expeditionary force. There were plans for the defence of ports, of territories and so forth. But no sooner did war break out than expeditions that clearly formed no part of the war plan were set in motion.

Trooping arrangements for bringing back armies from India had to be begun, together with many other things which most of us recollect. The Dominions are telegraphed on August 6 to undertake important Imperial services against German colonial possessions whose importance had not apparently attracted much attention before August 4, 1914. Tsing Tau was later on taken. No one will be so foolish as to imagine that absolute cut-and-dried plans can be prepared in every detail; but an examination in common of the problem of war and of the manner in which we believe our whole forces should act, will reduce the need for extensive improvisation such as we have seen. And it is essential that the Dominions should play their part in that common examination. We should avoid the recurrence of the situation described thus: 'On the afternoon of August 5 the Prime Minister convened an extraordinary Council of War at Downing Street. . . . *Decision was required upon the question, How should we wage the war that had just begun?*'[1]

No one, again, who has examined the problems of shipping and supply can say that we should not have been saved much trouble if both services—I except neither—had known more of the economic needs of the country. The effects of recruitment of men for the army upon the coal industries will be in everyone's recollection; but it was also intimately bound up with the submarine campaign. When shipping became scarce, its efficient employment became one of the most pressing needs of the country. The turn-rounds of shipping were affected by shortage of dock labour; if ships could not sail quickly and constantly, supplies could not come in. Delays in turn-round caused by want of skilled

[1] *The World Crisis*, Vol. I. p. 231.

labour were a direct aggravation of the submarine difficulty. I am very far from pretending it was easy, I might even say possible, to foresee this before the war. But I would say that had all of us, seamen and soldiers, made a closer study of war in its broad economic aspects we should have realised the quicker, as they grew, the impending situations, and have avoided some of the mistakes that the most Pangloss-like of us cannot pretend that we did not commit.

Such a study could only be made in co-operation. Some organisation for such study must exist if we are to avoid a repetition when next trouble arises. The Staff Colleges are three separate institutions—one at Camberley, one at Andover, one at Greenwich. Can these, even if they had the time, undertake this study? I doubt it. We have institutions for research in the domain of physical science as applied to war. It is not too much to say that the conduct of war is a matter equally needing research in the scientific spirit. When that is done, co-operation will become a real thing.

Turning from co-operation in the plane of major strategy to tactical co-operation in the field, I think we want to make more of a reality in impressing it in our training. It is one thing to state as a solemn platitude that the 'gentleman must haul and draw with the mariner.' It is quite another to impress it, to drive it home by means of illustration until it becomes a part of one's nature, of one's blood and bones, so that to act becomes a habit, an instinct. But while teaching can do much, it cannot do all. It is not enough. Combined practical work is also needed, and as much of it as possible.

There are records of failure in command, but also,

one is thankful to say, plenty of admirable examples of the fullest co-operation between the naval and military commands. I think we need to extract these, as well as their converse, from the pages of the past (in which I include, of course, the late war), and rub them into the minds of the rising generation, putting the pictures before them while they are young and their minds receptive, retentive, capable of assimilation; showing not only the spirit but also the actual measures taken to provide that each service pulled 100 per cent. of its weight. There is one example of which I am so particularly fond that I should like to repeat it. When Nelson was on the Riviera in 1796, Beaulieu, the Austrian General, sent an officer down to Voltri to ascertain the object of the British squadron. Nelson replied that 'co-operation was my duty. . . . I begged he would assure the General that my squadron had no object whatever but the co-operation with his army. . . . I was authorised by Sir John Jervis to promise the most sincere and cordial co-operation, for that nothing should be omitted on his part to convince the General and our allies, as well as our enemies and the neutral Powers' (observe the statesmanlike note in that sentence), 'how much the Admiral had the good of the Common Cause at heart. He asked me two or three times if there were not a risk that my squadron might be lost on the coast. To this I constantly replied that should these ships be lost, my Admiral would find others, and that he should risk the squadron at all times to assist the General.' I think a better exposition of the doctrine of co-operation than was given by Jervis and Nelson—for Jervis clearly approved this—it would be impossible to find. I suggest that Jervis's previous experiences contributed

to his breadth of view : he had been with the expedition under Wolfe to Quebec, and had conducted that admirable series of operations, true models of co-operation, with Sir Charles Grey in the West Indies. If one needs examples of the doctrine of co-operation one can always find them in Nelson's despatches : indeed I know of no better source to which to go for practical illustration of the doctrines of war in all its forms.

I have heard it said that so long as there are good and friendly personal relations between the commanders, all will go well. I agree that they are indispensable, and that they will lubricate the proceedings and eliminate much friction. But they are not enough. In that very campaign of 1796 there were the best of all possible relations between the commanders of the Austrians and Sardinians, Beaulieu and Colli. Personal friends of long standing, meeting constantly to talk things over, repeating to each other that nothing should ever be done to interrupt the harmony of their relations, they wholly failed to co-operate. Bouvier, in his ' Bonaparte en Italie,' says : ' Discord was permanently rife . . . the doctrine of each for himself prevailed.' It is the *doctrine* that matters. Each commander, military or naval, needs to be soaked in the true doctrine. But not only that. The object, the purpose, must be clear. If a squadron, or fleet, is sent to co-operate with an army, or an army with a fleet, the object of the expedition must be as clear as crystal. There have unquestionably been cases in which those who sent expeditions were not absolutely clear as to their own intentions in sending them. If the purpose is not perfectly defined, neither the naval nor the military commander can estimate the degree to which he can sacrifice his forces. Nelson,

knowing the object of his being sent to the Riviera, seeing the campaign as a whole, is prepared to sacrifice his ships because the situation demands military success. Nogi accepts tremendous sacrifices in his assaults on Port Arthur because he knows that the situation demands the destruction of the Russian fleet. Togo, knowing the importance to his military colleagues of stopping vessels getting into Port Arthur with supplies, maintains a difficult and dangerous situation, exposing his all-important ships to serious hazards.

Indoctrination of the officer is, then, a factor in obtaining co-operation. There is also, as I said earlier, practical work. It is not necessary for me to suggest to a body of officers the many, the very various, ways in which much can be done in this direction. All I will say is that no opportunity, however small, of doing work together should be neglected.

We have problems of the future to study, and these can, I believe, only be solved economically and truly if the whole problem of our services is studied in co-operation. No one who has made any attempt to look ahead can fail to see that the changed political situation, the changes in weapons on land, at sea and in the air, have brought with them a necessity for changes in our methods of 'compelling compliance' upon an enemy and defending ourselves. The worst possible way of reaching a decision is that of discussion by means of letters in the press in which people who are sublimely ignorant, or prejudiced, are tempted to take part. It is not with such people a case of trying to find out what is best, but to abuse as fools or knaves those who differ from them. Nothing, it seems to me, for example, is a more contemptible form of argument than that in

which officers are accused of opposing changes in methods of defence because of the loss of appointments or emoluments of their own service that would ensue. This is the absolute antithesis of co-operation: it is setting up barriers of prejudice, instead of coming together with a determination to discover what is best.

The processes of bringing this about appear to me to run as follows:

(1) Establish a doctrine of war in conformity with the interests, needs, and natural capacities in all their forms, of the Empire.

(2) Teach this doctrine in the *early* stages of all officers' careers, in all services. It is a real part of their general, as distinguished from their technical, education.

(3) Use this doctrine as the basis of the further Staff College work of the several Staff Colleges, which Staff Colleges should be not further apart than a man can walk out to dinner.

(4) Work upon it in investigation of problems of the future.

(5) Put it into practical operation in the preparation for war.

Everyone probably has his own pet solution of how this is to be done. Minister of Defence, Ministry of Defence (these are different), Combined Staff, Combined General Staff, combined staff training, combined initial training of cadets at a common college. I think I have heard all these argued, and, with respect, I would say ably argued. But do any of them provide the means for establishing a clear national doctrine based upon some foundation of policy? Do any of them furnish the opportunity for scientific study in common? My

experience of staff work—I have had some—was that the demands of the constant *immediate* problems absorbed attention and time. If we can get that common outlook upon war, and with that outlook study the past, apply its lessons of all kinds—administrative and strategical—to the future, we shall, I believe, be on the road towards getting co-operation as complete as our defective human nature will allow it to be.

ON INFORMING SUBORDINATES

'For to say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than a seeing man can by a light.' [1]

In war, secrecy is a good servant but a bad master. When the passion for it runs riot, discrimination tends to become lost, and a point is reached at which all those concerned in the active conduct of a war are acting in the dark, ignorant of the reason why they are called upon to submit to sacrifice, to put forth their utmost strength, or to do as they are ordered. This infallibly spells mischance. It is applicable equally to whole peoples or to small detachments of fighting forces. The man who thoroughly appreciates the situation, and who knows the intentions governing the action of his superiors, can interpret those intentions in terms of execution far more completely, because more intelligently, than he who has merely to obey an order of which he knows no more than the mere words in which it is couched. This is so much a truism that it should seem upon the face of it unnecessary to call attention to it, yet in practice it is one that is more frequently honoured in the breach than in the observance, and commanders of great experience and distinction have upon various

[1] Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*.

occasions marred the success of brilliant conceptions from neglect of it.

Where the failure fully to inform the executants of an operation of all the factors which influence it arises from distrust of subordinates, it argues either that the commander himself is ignorant of the importance of fully informing his colleagues, or that he distrusts their powers of executing his wishes, and therefore desires to retain in his own hands the full direction of affairs. If he so distrusts them it means that he considers them untrustworthy or incompetent, in which case he has either failed properly to train them and render them competent, or to have them replaced by better officers. His, therefore, in such a case, is the blame. If a chief commander—which may be Government in the case of grand strategy or a comparatively junior officer in the case of minor tactics—has not confidence in his subordinates, any decentralisation of command is impossible. Without decentralisation, initiative—that factor which so often has determined victory—is impossible, and the order for every movement must emanate from the central control. Then when an unexpected situation for which directions have not been provided or cannot be given arrives, the individual commanders become like the lawyers, ' not grounded in their books,' referred to by Bacon, ' who are many times easily surprised when matter falleth out beside their experience, to the prejudice of the causes they handle.'

There are no better-known examples of men being surprised ' when matters fall out beside their experience ' than those furnished by the skirmish off Toulon in February 1744, or Rodney's battle of April 17, 1780. In the former of these Admiral Mathews, a proud and

self-contained man, who kept all his officers at arm's length, finding himself unable to get into the position from which he could attack the enemy in accordance with the method prescribed by the Fighting Instructions of the day, was obliged to deliver his attack in a different manner. In the unexpected situation in which this placed his captains many of them were at a loss how to act, since no instructions existed to provide for such a case. The admiral had never discussed the tactics of the Fleet with his captains, nor even with his vice- and rear-admirals. Indeed, so far as his vice-admiral was concerned, this officer had been kept in complete ignorance of all that was passing in the Mediterranean campaign. The night before the battle he had come on board the flagship to request directions concerning the imminent engagement, and had been dismissed with the curt remark that there were none to give, that it was a cold night, and that he was wished good-evening. For months the vice-admiral had never been in the confidence of his admiral, and had chafed at the unsympathetic treatment. Thus the same influence—lack of confidence in subordinates—acting through different channels, was instrumental in causing what should have been a victorious action to degenerate into an indecisive skirmish. The second-in-command, disappointed and jealous, took no pains to hasten into action; some of the captains, doubtful, through ignorance of their chief's intentions, as to how they should act, interpreted their instructions in different ways, so that an attack which furnished the opening for an effectual and possibly decisive concentration on the enemy's rear melted away into a few single-ship combats and remains a byword in our naval history.

In Rodney's action Captain Carkett misunderstood his commander-in-chief's intention to attack the rear. A signal had been provided for the intended manœuvre: 'When the commander-in-chief means to make an attack upon the enemy's rear he will hoist, etc. . . .' After skilful manœuvring Rodney placed his line in position, and made the signal to lead down upon the enemy, keeping station on the admiral. But the intention was not grasped by the captain of the van ship, a brave and gallant seaman, who led down, in the manner to which he was accustomed, upon the enemy's van. It is idle to say that the meaning *ought* to have been clear to Carkett, or that by his stupidity or other fault of character he spoilt Rodney's well-planned opening. The fact remains that he did not understand it, and that not he only but also the majority of the captains in the van were in the same state of misunderstanding. This was because Rodney never took his subordinates into his confidence. He provided signals, and expected unquestioning obedience to the letter of them, and his captains, not being fully *au courant* with the workings of his mind, served him ill when the looked-for moment arrived. 'Do not let us depend upon signals,' says a recent French naval writer, 'for our action in battle. What matters is not that a signal can be executed, but that the thoughts of the admiral, common to all, hovering over the battle, should be interpreted and put into practice.' [1]

The same writer expresses the idea at greater length in another place. 'Guided by this common doctrine, bound to apply the regulations with which all the elements under his command are familiar to the point of

[1] A. Baudry, *La Bataille navale.*

instinct (which is in no sense a restriction upon his free will), the commander-in-chief is yet under another obligation towards his subordinates, viz., that of informing them of his intentions in order that each may co-operate with all his energy and all his intelligence. He must also discount in advance the effect of surprise upon us, prevent the effect of an unexpected blow being doubled by an unexpected order. He must explain to us before the battle how he proposes—*D.V.*—to adapt regulations to realities according to the circumstances of the battle. . . . If the first point is to take in an order quickly, the second is to assimilate it quickly, and the third to execute it without delay. Rapid assimilation requires that everyone should know, *fore-know*, the chief's plan. Orders and signals should merely be to confirm, perhaps to complete, but at most only to modify the idea embodied in the memorandum—the idea that everyone has turned over and over in his mind until it has become his very own to carry it out.'

Baudry's remarks are clearly based upon a study of Nelson's methods. The reference to surprise is in obvious relationship to Nelson's remarks to Keats that he intended to 'surprise and confound' the enemy, while the previous explanations by the admiral to his captains are what Nelson invariably practised. With him there was no secrecy, and among the sources of his greatness none is more remarkable than his habit of taking his commanders fully into his confidence and informing them to the utmost as to his intentions. 'I never conversed with any officer of his fleet,' says Sir Byam Martin, 'without hearing the most hearty expressions of admiration of his conciliatory manner to all, and his frank way of conversing with his captains

respecting the movements of the fleet.' It was surely this habit of frank converse that enabled his captains so readily to translate his intentions into executive action, confident that they were doing what he would have desired them to do. If we contrast Nelson's practice with that of Mathews or Rodney, the difference in method is no less remarkable than the difference in the result. The surprising completeness of the Nile victory—although Calder said Nelson ought to be punished for fighting in a manner different from all preceding battles—was the direct result of the numerous conversations with and explanations to his captains. So again at Trafalgar, Nelson had prepared his major tactics beforehand, his captains were fully seised of his intentions, and when the fleets met, although the situation was entirely different from that presupposed in the memorandum, the plan was sufficiently elastic, its governing principles sufficiently understood, for his officers to interpret his ideas and apply the principles he had explained to them.

A direct corollary to this confidence which Nelson reposed in his juniors was the confidence which, it would seem, they reposed in him, not hesitating to offer suggestions because suggestions were not repelled. Frankness induces frankness, and so far are we all from infallibility that criticisms or suggestions helpful to the senior may often be drawn from the junior. An unduly reserved attitude, such as that of Rodney in his lonely furrow, quickly operates to repress both spontaneous thought and its communication. Few men enjoy being snubbed ; most are induced to work harder by the flattery of recognition and encouragement. One well-administered rebuke, suggesting that opinions are not required

until they are asked for, will effectively chill any enthusiasm for suggestion, or even for giving any more thought to the problems of the moment. With Nelson, suggestions were treated differently. Not only was it no crime to make them, but he took pains that he who offered helpful opinions received the credit for them. 'It is right also,' says Mahan in his appreciation of the *Agamemnon-Ça Ira* engagement (March 13, 1795, *æt. sua* 37), 'to note the accessibility to advice, a feature of his genial and kindly temperament, *to which he admitted much of his success was due.*[1] The trait is not rare in mankind in general, but it is exceptional in men of a character so self-reliant and decided as Nelson. "If the conduct of the *Agamemnon* on the 13th," he generously wrote, "was by any means the cause of our success on the 14th, Lieutenant Andrews has a principal share in the merit, for a more proper opinion was never given by an officer than the one he gave me on the 13th, in a situation of great difficulty." ' But if Nelson had withheld information and denied confidence to his officers, had kept aloof from them, and had not encouraged thought and suggestion on their part, he would never have received this very 'proper opinion' from Andrews. A comparison between Nelson and Rodney in this respect is unavoidable. Readers of the letters of Lord Hood will recollect his description of the relations between that admiral and his first captain, Sir Charles Douglas, upon whom Rodney's chilling manner seems to have imposed a fear of making any suggestion. 'In a great fleet the duty of a first captain is that of being an honest and candid counsellor and adviser to the commander-in-chief, and there ought to be a most perfect good understanding

[1] Writer's italics.

with, and confidence in, each other.[1] . . . Sure I am that if Sir George Rodney was to give orders in his cabin for any signal to be made, which would inevitably throw the fleet into the greatest confusion, or even into danger, Sir Charles has not fortitude and resolution sufficient to open his lips in remonstrance, but would most implicitly obey it.' How far this was Rodney's fault for an overbearing manner or Douglas's for one that was too subservient, cannot be said. But anyone with experience of human nature will know that the attitude of the senior towards criticism will generally determine the attitude of the junior towards making any. That Rodney did not take his subordinates into his confidence we have already heard. The manner in which he was disserved by Douglas is only a manifestation of the effects of such aloofness.

A remarkable case of a failure owing to an admiral withholding information as to his intentions occurred in the Mediterranean in 1793.[2] On this occasion Lord Hood, that great and splendid officer, ordered some frigates upon a detached service, which he informed the senior officer was of great importance. This officer was Captain Lumsdaine, of the *Isis*. The squadron under Lumsdaine was to go to Tripoli, carrying, among other things, some presents to the Bashaw, but on her way thither a frigate was to be detached into Tunis to give a despatch to the Consul at that place. When near Tunis Lumsdaine detached the *Tisiphone*, Captain Martin, who proceeded towards the port; but when he opened the anchorage Martin, to his surprise, observed a French squadron of thirteen ships of war at anchor. Without

[1] *Cf.* Mr. Lloyd George's speech on Cabinet relations.

[2] The full story will be found in the *Memoirs of Sir Byam Martin.*

an instant's delay he hauled out to sea and rejoined the commodore, flying the signal for an enemy in sight. Lumsdaine, after verifying Martin's report by a personal reconnaissance, decided not to send the *Tisiphone* into the bay. He considered that as the French in a previous war had not respected the neutrality of a civilised port like Porto Praya—where Suffren had attacked Johnstone—much less would they respect an open bay on the Barbary coast where there were no forts to enforce obedience. Even if the French had paid respect to the Bey of Tunis, they would have been able to block the British ships in the port and so prevent the execution of the other order, which directed him to proceed without loss of time to Tripoli. From the general tenor of his instructions Lumsdaine concluded that the service of delivering a letter at Tunis was 'not of that importance as to authorise me to risk the loss of any of his Majesty's ships and the convoy,' and conceiving that 'a certain degree of discretionary power was vested in a commodore of a King's squadron, or any person holding a responsible position,' he acted upon his own views of the matter, and, sending a frigate to inform the commander-in-chief of the presence of the French squadron, he proceeded upon his voyage towards Tripoli.

When Hood received this information he was furious. He knew all about the French squadron when he detached Lumsdaine, and the sending of the despatch to Tunis was a trick. 'I had fully calculated,' he said, 'that the French admiral would, in the rashness of his republican feelings, have captured the *Tisiphone*—at any rate, it was my plan to put the temptation in his way; and if the bait had been taken I was prepared to

make a general sweep of the French ships of war out of every neutral port.' He tried Lumsdaine by court-martial for disobedience of orders. Lumsdaine was found guilty, but acquitted, the court considering that he was justified in disobeying orders in the circumstances.

Thus this unique plan for sweeping the neutral ports miscarried because Hood did not let his officers, who had the duty of executing it, into the secret. They went in ignorance, and acted in accordance with what seemed to them the necessities of the moment. But if Hood had trusted his subordinates and informed them of his plan, it is hardly possible to doubt, especially when Martin's fire-eating reputation is remembered, that it would have succeeded. The cheese would have been dangled so temptingly, perhaps so provokingly, that a bite at it would have been irresistible.

This episode furnishes an excellent example of the effects of neglect of a principle to which General Sir L. E. Kiggell refers in his new edition of Hamley's 'Operations of War.'[1] 'The commander of a detachment has often a very difficult task to perform. To carry out his task satisfactorily he must have a thorough knowledge of the broad situation and of the plans of his general-in-chief.' Lumsdaine was given neither of these, and his detachment failed in its enterprise. If we look broadly at the operations of naval forces we realise that in reality every outlying squadron is in a measure a detachment, whether it be a cruiser squadron working, say, in the North Sea, or a larger force such as the Mediterranean Fleet. Nothing is more evident

[1] *The Operations of War*, by Sir E. B. Hamley (Edinburgh: Wm. Blackwood and Sons), p. 398.

than that it was fully recognised in the past how necessary to a detached commander was full information concerning 'the broad situation.' The letters reprinted in the Barham and Spencer Papers and the correspondence in the State Papers show at what length the First Lords of the Admiralty, or the Secretaries of State, took pains fully to acquaint the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean with the whole diplomatic situation so far as it could possibly affect the campaign up the Straits. The escape of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* into the Dardanelles tempts one to wonder whether the British admirals in command were kept fully informed of the attitude of Turkey at that critical time, in order that they might be able to form a judgment as to the probabilities or the effects of these German cruisers arriving at Constantinople —or again, in Mesopotamia, whether the intended scope of the operations and the part they were intended to play in the general scheme of the war were made plain to the general in command. If a Government takes pains to issue full, judicious, and carefully prepared instructions to its commanders, specifically setting out the object of the expedition, there is less danger that a force sent perhaps with a strictly defensive or containing object shall be led into a campaign of a wholly different nature. The preparation of the instructions themselves, from the endeavour to put the case as clearly as possible before the commander, will, moreover, serve to assist the Government to clear its own mind as to what it wishes done.

Whether, then, we consider this question of giving full information to subordinates from the point of view of the smallest or the greatest operations of war, its necessity becomes equally obvious. Only a few

examples have been given in this short review; they could be multiplied a hundredfold from history, and it is not improbable that the late war will furnish plenty of fresh examples. But it must not be imagined that this habit of taking subordinates into either confidence or counsel is one which can be suddenly assumed, like a garment, in war. It must form a part of the training of officers in peace. They must learn to give confidence and to take counsel, and to respect confidence. One of the reasons most commonly given against doing so is that if information is so given it leaks out. Bacon speaks of it as one of the inconveniences of counsel, 'the revealing of affairs whereby they become less secret,' but his remedies are clear. 'Princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select,' and he shrewdly adds a comment, 'but let princes beware that the unsecreting of affairs comes not from themselves.' If the complaint of indiscretion in high places which formed the subject of a letter in *The Times* some years ago was justified, it would seem that Bacon not inaccurately judged whence much of the leakage came, that nature has not greatly changed in the last 300 years, and that the high officers who deny information to their juniors and keep them in ignorance would do well to make sure that their lips are sufficiently padlocked in public conversations. But this, in any case, must be made a matter of habit. It must be instilled in the young, and taught to them so that the preservation of secrecy of essential things is as natural to them as any other custom. It is, in fact, a question of training, to which far too little attention is usually paid in these materialistic days. The result to which we lay ourselves liable is that seniors, knowing

themselves to be lax, do not trust juniors—that secrecy becomes a fetish, and that important information, essential to the successful conduct of war, is withheld from the very people to whom knowledge of it is most important.

A SERVICE like the navy, in which discipline is of such supreme importance, is one in which peculiar danger is run of stifling initiative both of thought and action. Men are prone to grow to believe that not only must they implicitly obey orders, but that they have nothing else to do; that they must not dispute authority by act or opinion. Like the young Indian civilian,[1] 'they are taught to do what they are told, which is right, and to think what they are told, which is wrong. And they do.' Such a habit of thought is fatal to the progress of a service. Discussion cannot exist under such conditions, and officers become mere automata. The description which the writer quoted above gives of the result of an education characterised by such principles, may well be pondered over, and we may consider whether it be not very applicable also to the navy. 'They are taught to repeat in a parrot manner stock phrases and imagine they are thinking. And this habit once acquired is difficult to get rid of.' Have not we ourselves experience of men in our own service whose whole strategical knowledge consists in a set of phrases and no more? 'Invasion is impossible.' 'The place of the fleet is off the enemy's coasts.' 'A sailor must go to sea young.' 'Trade will be safe because the enemy's

[1] *The Passing of Empire*, by Fielding Hall.

commerce destroyers will be relentlessly hunted down.' 'The sea is all one.' 'Never think about ulterior objects.' 'The fleet has only one object, the destruction of the enemy's fleet,' and so on. Most of these are based, or at some time have been based, upon sound principles. In all of them there is a measure of truth, sometimes a great deal more. But when these phrases are made to do duty for accurate and sustained thought they become pernicious and, by stifling thinking, ruin the mental constitution of those who allow themselves to be satisfied with them.

'A third cause of common errors,' says Sir Thomas Browne, 'is the credulity of men, that is, an easy assent to what is obtruded; or a believing at first ear what is delivered by others. This is a weakness in the understanding, without examination assenting unto things which from their names and causes do carry persuasion; whereby men often swallow falsities for truths, dubiosities for certainties, sensibilities for possibilities, and things impossible for possibilities themselves. Which though a weakness of the intellect and most discoverable in vulgar heads, yet hath it sometimes fallen upon wiser brains and great advancers of truth.' The cause of this error, he says, is supinity or neglect of inquiry, 'rather believing than going to see; or doubting with ease and gratis than believing with difficulty and purchase.'[1]

Marshal Saxe observed the same tendency in the French army, in the middle of the eighteenth century. 'Gustavus Adolphus,' he wrote, 'invented a method which was followed by his scholars and carried into execution with great success; but since his time, there has been a gradual decline amongst us, which must be

[1] *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, chap. v.

imputed to our *having blindly adopted maxims, without any examination of the principles on which they were founded*; from whence proceeds that confusion of customs, which everyone has assumed the privilege of adding to or diminishing at leisure.' [1]

An officer is too often content to say, 'Here is truth; Mahan says it is so. Who am I to question Mahan? I know that this or that saying is true. I am not going to bother my head to read a lot of books to prove it, or to argue with anyone who takes a different view. The authorities are good enough for me.'

Such an outlook is not uncommon. It is the direct outcome of a system of training which fails to furnish any education in the process of reasoning, devotes much attention to memorising and examinations, and is highly condemnatory of any expression of opinion which clashes with the current dogmas. Many officers may recollect that at the time of the controversy about the new scheme of education, letters appeared in the papers most strongly deprecating discussion, on the ground that the Admiralty contained the 'best brains' of the navy, and therefore any scheme proposed by the Admiralty must be above criticism. How has experience justified this appeal for sublime faith? Is the scheme even now perfect, and was not this perfect policy reversed very early in so far as it related to the Marines? and has it not been entirely altered in its engineering provisions?

Lord Charles Beresford, as he then was, said some years ago that the lot of the naval reformer was not unlike that of the early Christian. The comparison was apt. It remains true to-day. Yet the 'heretic' is

[1] *The Art of War*, Field-Marshal Comte de Saxe, 1758.

one of the most valuable factors in the preservation of the mental health of any community. If his opinions are wrong, open discussion will disprove them. To censor them, or punish him for holding these opinions, is undeniably wrong. Censorship, said Milton in the 'Areopagitica,' conduced to 'the discouragement of all learning and the stop of truth.' So let the heretic speak his thought, for he may be right, as heretics and iconoclasts from Socrates to modern times have occasionally been. Discussion should indeed be encouraged by every means. 'He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that. His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on the opposite side, if he does not so much as know what they are, he has no ground for preferring either opinion.' [1] This failure to attempt to get to the bottom of the reasons on the other side is only too common a defect in discussing naval questions. To hold opinions differing from those of the Administration has been frequently to court professional extinction.

To impede discussion is to induce mental slavery, the worst form of tyranny that can exist. 'There have been, and may again be, great individual thinkers in a general atmosphere of mental slavery. But there never has been, nor ever will be, in that atmosphere an intellectually active people.' [2] Let then our hierarchy of educators make provision for the encouragement of thought and discussion, than which nothing can do more to assure an intellectually active navy. And let them above all encourage the expressions of opinions in writing, which is the most searching self test of the

[1] 'Of Thought and Discussion,' J. S. Mill. [2] *Ibid.*

opinions themselves. 'If a man tries to set forth in writing his views about some difficult problem—social, political, metaphysical or whatever it may be—the very effort that he makes to express himself clearly and coherently will tend to bring order into the chaos, and light into the darkness of his mind, to widen his outlook upon his subject, to deepen his insight into it, to bring new aspects of it within reach of his conscious thoughts. . . . The student who wishes to master a difficult piece of book-work should try to write it out in his own words; in the effort to set it out concisely and lucidly he will gradually perfect his apprehensions of it. Were he to solve a difficult problem he would probably regard his grasp of the solution as insecure and incomplete until he had succeeded in making it intelligible to the mind of another.' [1]

No one who has ever tried to master a problem will deny the truth of that quotation. Those who have had to instruct classes will probably agree that no part of the course was more valuable than that in which they had to make their subjects 'intelligible to the mind of another'; and the stupider the person to whom the explanation has to be made, the greater is the test of thorough knowledge of the subject. But with a few instances of lectures given by qualifying specialists, the system of which this is the expression is hardly made use of. History, that valuable ladder to strategy, is taught not infrequently as a string of disconnected events and not as what it really may be, a philosophic study of cause and effect. Only too commonly, historical

[1] *What is and what might be*, E. Holmes, p. 85. John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury in Queen Mary's reign, put the same idea shortly: 'Men acquire more learning by the frequent exercise of the pen than by reading many books.'

lectures are mere relations of facts, the movements of squadrons, the dates they sailed and returned, the ships sunk. Knowledge of such a string of episodes by themselves is not of the smallest value. The object of the cruise, its place in the strategy, its results and the reason why these results were produced, are what are needed to be brought clearly into prominence; and the dates and facts are of importance only in order to ensure that the reasoning is based upon correct data. That such lectures should be given was the fault of a system which laid down that the lecture was not to be more than a recital of events, and forbade all attempt to read the lessons of history with a seeing eye. There is no more valueless subject than naval history used in this manner. But if history is properly studied, including reading it, writing it and discussing it, it admits no superior in the mental training of officers whose profession is war.

It is a delusion, still entertained unfortunately by some, that no need exists for the study of war, and that the word 'strategy' should be taboo, redolent only of academics. Such people say that 'common sense' or 'genius' will solve all problems. Common sense and genius will go far; but both are rare possessions. A genius arises only occasionally, while 'common sense' has been defined not inaptly as 'un-common sense' and frequently proves to be no more than 'common stupidity.' Even if we should find a leader with one or both of these qualities, they will not replace hard and diligent study of war. They may solve some problems —they probably will. But they will not solve all, and above all they will not furnish the means of preparing for war, in which a wide knowledge of principles, a vivid

imagination, and a power of organisation in detail are indispensable. Nor will genius even solve all current puzzles of strategy that arise in a campaign. Mistakes are bound to be made, even by the greatest captains; and he who makes least wins. We know that Nelson himself did not always guess correctly the enemy's intentions; but we know also how hard he reasoned to discover them. He proceeded upon no blind intuition, but upon deductions from information from every possible source, and upon a traditional strategy a century old. We know too—as in 1798—how vast would have been, in all probability, the results if he had always reasoned aright. Mahan has an interesting comment [1] upon an opinion of Nelson's in 1796 concerning the French occupation of Leghorn. 'This opinion,' says Mahan, 'was scarcely worthy of Nelson's real native sagacity, and shows clearly how a man, even of genius, is hampered in the conclusions of actual life by the lack of that systematic ordering and training of the ideas which it is the part of education to supply. Genius is one thing, the acquirements of an accomplished—instructed—officer are another, yet there is between the two nothing incompatible, rather the reverse; and when to the former, which nature alone can give—and to Nelson did give—is added the conscious recognition of principles, the practical habit of viewing under their clear light all the circumstances of a situation, assigning to each its due weight and relative importance, then, and then only, is the highest plane of military greatness obtained.'

'That systematic ordering and training of the ideas which it is the part of education to supply.' How has

[1] *Life of Nelson*, 2nd edition, p. 199.

the education of naval officers attempted to order and train the ideas, to instil 'principles' and develop a 'practised habit' of weighing a situation? Little trace of it can be found in any part of the education up to the stage at which officers have hitherto been introduced to some form of study of war. And when such study began at the War Colleges there were obstacles to the development of the qualities required. One, that the officers were frequently mature, their minds no longer supple. New processes of thought, new customs, do not come easily at that stage. 'Certainly custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years: this we call education; which is in effect, but an early custom. . . . For it is true that late learners cannot so well take the ply; except it be in some minds that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment; which is exceeding rare.'[1] What Bacon said over 300 years ago remains true to-day. A mind whose attention has been applied to questions of ship organisation, gunnery, electricity and other technical matters up to the age of 35 or 40 cannot readily 'take the ply' of new studies; and this drawback to our present system can only be remedied by beginning the study at an earlier stage, as our captains and admirals did in the past, and as every writer on military education has consistently recommended, realising the saying that 'if a man applies himself to servile or mechanical employments, his industry in those things is a proof of his inattention to nobler studies.'[2]

Much of our education is conducted by lectures, in

[1] *Of Custom and Education*, Bacon.
[2] Plutarch's *Lives*: 'Pericles.'

the belief that a person can learn by listening. This idea is fallacious. A lecture can but touch on the fringe of a subject; it can indicate certain points, draw out certain principles, excite interest—or otherwise. But it cannot replace the hard reading, the persistent study, the writing down and the discussion of views by which alone a professional's knowledge is to be distinguished from that of an amateur. Any able man with a good memory could make the round of the lecture rooms of London and be able to converse glibly upon Astronomy, Archaeology, Art, or Aeronautics in a manner well calculated to please himself and to induce admiration among the ignorant. But he will not *know* anything about any of these subjects. Nor will naval officers know anything about war merely because they have attended a series of lectures on 'Tactics,' 'Cruisers,' 'Submarines,' and 'International Law.' Their attention will have been drawn to some points which would, or might, not otherwise have occurred to them: points which will enable them to fix their eyes upon certain principles perhaps, or awaken their imagination. Valuable considerations for guidance in studies will have been brought into notice, and a better direction may be given to future reading: but that is all. Thought and discussion need to be brought into play after the lecturer has had his say.

The very art of reading requires to be learned by those who have not been taught how to learn. There are many of us who have read lives of Nelson, Hawke, and St. Vincent, histories of the Royal Navy, or philosophical tracts like those of Mahan on the 'Influence of Sea Power.' But there must be a very great number of these readers who have never got the marrow out of

them, otherwise how could such doctrines have found acceptance as some which have influenced us in recent years? How, for instance, could anyone who had really studied, imagine that light cruisers were unnecessary, that our reserves of men were too large, or that a vast number of light craft of all kinds would not be needed in war? Books indeed are only too frequently read merely for their narrative, in which attention is drawn to individual incidents. The manner in which the war was being designed, the interrelation of the operations in all the various theatres of war, the governing opinions of the time as to tactics and strategy, all of which lie beneath the surface and have to be searched for by each individual reader, are left untouched; and we may close the book satisfied with remembering that Nelson in the *Captain* 74 engaged the *Santissima Trinidad* 130 in an uncommonly dashing manner, and that Lord Howe was 68 when he fought the battle of the 1st of June. We appreciate the determination of Jervis' character in suppressing mutiny, his quaint and kindly humour in the incident of the blue and gold image, but we know far less of his great strategic insight and courage, so marked in particular in 1798, when he divided his fleet in face of a numerically superior force; or of the brilliancy of the operations in the conjunct expedition to the West Indies with General Charles Grey.

This habit of superficial reading and of the substitution of phrases for ordered and reasoned thought leads to indifferent preparation for war. The harm done to our commerce at the beginning of the war by the enemy's cruisers, and the greater harm done later by submarines, are both traceable to an easy-going acceptance

of the theory that a *guerre-de-course must* fail, without examining the reasons supporting the theory. Yet no one will feel inclined to deny that the *guerre-de-course* took a distinctly threatening form in March and April 1916, still more so in 1917, and was still a formidable threat in the summer of 1918.[1] In fact, it came within measurable distance of succeeding. These wretched catchwords have the especial demerit of being partly true; they form excellent *motifs* for popular writers; they are useful if confined strictly within their limits; but they are bad mental food for professional officers. An unquestioning acceptance of the theory of 'a fleet in being' was largely responsible for the Russian disasters in Manchuria in the Russo-Japanese war; and the same kind of catchword doctrine may be traced in the opinion expressed by the Conference of Russian Flag Officers, which stated that 'it was not necessary in naval warfare to draw up a plan of operation beforehand.' This opinion has not been unheard of in our service. It is to be hoped that the last war will have demolished it once and for all, for a more ignorant and foolish doctrine could not exist. We are now aware of the importance of the initiative, and that the initiative cannot be seized unless plans are thought out beforehand.

The silence of a naval officer in a discussion with Ministers is often excused on the grounds that he is not a 'man of words,' but a 'man of action'; and that it is natural that he should not be able to hold his own in a discussion with lawyers and others whose trade it is to talk. This idea that a man of action cannot be a thinker, or capable if he be one of putting the thoughts into words, is curious, in face of the fact that many

[1] 150,000 tons were lost in September 1918.

of the greatest men of action in the world's history have been both thinkers and able exponents of their views. Alexander the Great, the pupil of Aristotle, was both philosopher and rhetorician; Julius Caesar and Xenophon were great in thought and action; Alfred the Great, a man of action of the first order, the founder, as we call him, of the British Navy, was a scholar, a translator and compiler of books on many subjects, a patron of scholars and a founder of schools. Napoleon, the writer of 'Le Souper de Beaucaire,' 'A Dialogue on Love,' and 'A Parallel between Apollonius of Tyana and Jesus Christ,' was not prevented by his philosophy from being a man of action; Frederick the Great, 'the bookish, philosophising, verse-making cynic and profligate,' [1] Saxe, Montcalm, Wolfe, Raleigh, Clive, St. Vincent, Anson, Wellington—will it be said that any of these men of action, taken at random, could not sit in the War Cabinet and hold his own with all the members of the Council in argument? The answer admits of no doubt whatever.

An era of peace is, so far as one can see, ahead of us, for some years at any rate. How long it will last none of us can tell. But whether the Millennium is about to arrive, and wars to cease, is no matter for us—seamen—even to answer. So long as navies and armies are maintained the sole duty of those who are employed by the State in the professions of arms is to be efficient—not to say whether armaments are necessary, but to be expert in their employment. Efficiency inevitably tends to fall in peace since the stimulant of an immediate danger is absent. The most effective, indeed the only effective, means of preserving efficiency in the absence

[1] Parkman, *Wolfe and Montcalm*, i. 20.

of experience lies in the study of the problems that will arise if war comes. Imagination—most rare of all qualities in the Anglo-Saxon according to some, though less rare than is commonly supposed—stimulated by the study of experience, must be brought into play, the operations of sea-war must be examined, compared, analysed and prepared for; that is to say, thought must be directed towards what has happened, and those measures which have proved good must be sifted from those which proved bad. The measures taken must be translated from terms of the past into terms of the future in readiness for use if occasion shall arise. This is a great labour. It cannot be conducted without discussion, patient discussion, based not upon proving that what was done in the war was right, that failures were inevitable, or that other measures were wrong; but in the true scientific spirit in which the chemist works in his laboratory attempting to discover what is *true*. To stifle this work by impeding discussion, by putting shackles upon thought, by concealing mistakes, is to do the greatest disservice to the State in the future. It was not by so doing that the French navy recovered after the Seven Years War,[1] and developed into the fighting force, seamanly conducted, so highly praised by Kempenfelt; nor was it by concealment of mistakes and suppression of discussion that the French army after 1871 was transformed into that wonderful instrument that withstood the strain of the late war, and bred commanders so capable as those whose work we have witnessed. To pretend that no blunders were made in the preparation for and conduct of the last war would be foolish. Persistently to close our eyes and

[1] Chevalier, *Histoire de la Marine Française*.

refuse to see what all men can see is deliberately to fail in our duty to the State. So long as the nation deems it proper to maintain a navy we must assume that it is necessary, and war still a possibility. The years of peace are those of preparation for war, and this preparation can only be adequate, and subsequent success attained at the least price, if thought, with its corrective, discussion, are encouraged to the utmost. The process of developing the power of thought must be begun at the beginning of the naval officer's career and carried through all its stages. Mechanical methods of teaching, in which memory plays the greatest part, must give way to more intelligent methods. This is the principal work ahead of us.

SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S REFORMS IN ADMINISTRATION AND COMMAND AT THE ADMIRALTY [1]

THE subject of the constitution of the Board of Admiralty before the changes made by Sir James Graham in 1832 is revived by some sentences in Sir Gerald Ellison's recently published book, 'The Perils of Amateur Strategy.' 'The Navy,' he writes, 'had its Board of Admiralty consisting of executive officers, who, as a commission under the Crown, exercised the powers of the dormant office of Lord High Admiral. Its administration was vested in a separate Navy Board, the Board of Ordnance, and other similar boards which functioned under powers derived solely from Parliament. Thus, in former times the Board of Admiralty itself had no actual part in Administration, and its members were free to apply their minds and their time to the consideration of war problems and to the conduct of war. The Board constituted what to-day is known as a General Staff, and it had full executive powers over the fleets.'

This description of the Board is not strictly accurate. The inaccuracies do not affect the subsequent arguments in the book; on the contrary, the true

[1] *The Perils of Amateur Strategy*, by Lieut.-General Sir Gerald Ellison, K.C.B. Longmans, Green & Co., 1926.

facts lend strength to those arguments and deserve recognition.

The Board of Admiralty before 1832 did not consist of 'Executive Officers,' if by that term is meant—as the reference at the end of the quotation to a General Staff implies—officers of the fighting branch of the navy. It consisted at all times of a proportion, generally a large one, of what Lord Ellenborough called 'gentlemen of parliamentary influence,' and it is not without some interest to notice the varying fortunes of the war at sea at different times as the proportion between civilians and seamen varied.

If we should try to select two of the most unsuccessful periods of the conduct of our wars at sea, we should probably choose those of the War of the Austrian Succession, before Anson came to the helm, and the War of the American Revolution; and as successful periods we might take the years after 1758, and those between 1803 and 1805. The Boards during these several periods were (with slight changes of personnel but not of proportion) as follows:

1744.

Lord Winchilsea
J. Cokburne, Esq.
Admiral Lord Archd. Hamilton
Lord Baltimore
George Lee, Esq., LL.D.
Admiral Sir Charles Hardy [1]
John Philipson, Esq.
Seven Members; two Seamen.

1759.

Admiral Lord Anson
Vice-Admiral Hon. E. Boscawen
George Hay, Esq.
Thomas Hunter, Esq.
Gilbert Elliott, Esq.
Vice-Admiral Hon. John Forbes
Hans Stanley, Esq.
Seven Members; three Seamen, with a sea officer at the head of the Board.

[1] For a short time only.

1775.	1805.
John, Earl of Sandwich	Admiral Lord Barham
John Buller, Esq.	Sir Philip Stephens, Bart.[1]
Lord Palmerston	Vice-Admiral James Gambier
Lord Charles Spencer	Vice-Admiral Philip Patton
Lord Lisburne	Wm. Dickenson, Esq.
H. Penton, Esq.	Sir Evan Nepean, Bart.
Vice-Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser	Captain Viscount Garlies, R.N.
Seven Members ; one Seaman.	*Seven Members ; four Seamen and a sea officer at the head.*

The period of which the Board of 1744 is representative was one of gross mismanagement of the campaigns at sea. Trade suffered most severe losses. The Mediterranean squadron was starved for cruisers ; its requirements in stores and facilities of repairs were unattended to. Forces were dissipated, the representations of experienced seamen were put aside almost with contempt. A flag officer of the time remarked that the First Commissioner, Lord Winchilsea, paid no attention to the advice of anyone experienced in sea affairs, and that 'the only method left him (the speaker) of showing his dislike to the absurd and ridiculous orders which were issued from that Board was to refuse signing them.'

The period 1775–82 was that in which naval strategy was the most misdirected of almost any of our history. The most fundamental principle in war—concentration of force—was consistently violated in favour of dissipation over wide expanses. Of that phase of our naval operations Mahan wrote: 'It can scarcely be said the military conceptions of her councils or the correct management of her sea forces were worthy of the skill

[1] Sir Philip Stephens had been Secretary of the Admiralty throughout the War of the American Revolution, and had a long and extensive acquaintance with the great seamen with whom he had been in touch, and with their methods.

and devotion of her seamen.'[1] The Board in which command was vested during those unfortunate years, 1775–82, was composed of seven persons, of whom one only was a seaman; and, to judge by Sir Charles Middleton's remonstrances to the First Lord, was far from diligent in its attention to business. 'Unless a new plan is adopted, and your Lordship gives your whole time to the business of the Admiralty, the misapplication of the fleet will bring ruin upon this country.'[2] Well justified, indeed, was Raleigh, when he wrote:

'It is to be wished that the chiefe officers under the Lord Admiral should be men of experience in sea service, as well as of judgment and practice in the utensils and necessaries belonging to shipping, even from the batt's end to the very kelson of the ship; and that no kind of people should be preferred to any of these officers, but such as have been thoroughly practiced and be very judiciall in either kind of the above named services; but we oftentimes see it to fall out otherwise.'

It 'fell out otherwise' during the seventeenth century, when a custom seems to have begun by which the Secretaries of State assumed an important part of the direction of naval affairs. A writer, apparently of about 1692, remarked that 'The authority of the Lord High Admiral is very much diminished by the mode the Secretaries of State have fallen into of giving instructions from the King, and signifying his commands to Admirals sent on foreign expeditions without communicating them by the way of the Admiralty, through

[1] *Influence of Sea Power on History*, p. 412. The criticism that follows on pp. 413–417 illustrates the errors in principle.

[2] *Letters of Lord Barham*, vol. ii.

which, regularly, they ought to pass. This makes the Admiralty less valued by its own officers, who, by that means, act in a kind of independence of them and give them no account of their proceedings; so that often the Admiralty is ignorant of what foreign squadrons are doing, and admirals make their court to the Secretaries of State, and keep up regular correspondence with them and take more delight in receiving orders from them than from their own officer.' The practice thus alluded to continued during the eighteenth century, as late as the end of the War of the American Revolution. The Commanders-in-Chief in the East Indies throughout that war, and during the years preceding it, had their instructions from the King by the hands of the Secretary of State, and each was definitely directed 'to follow such orders as he shall receive from the King by one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State,' and to correspond with him. The same occurred in the Mediterranean and the Channel commands, but not regularly. The precise circumstances in which the Secretary of State or the Admiralty issued instructions are not clear; nor, apparently, was it always certain even in those days, for when Sir Peter Denis, in June 1774, was to be relieved by Rear-Admiral Man in command of the Mediterranean squadron, the Admiralty asked Lord Rochford whether the new Commander-in-Chief was to be directed to correspond with the Principal Secretary as his predecessor had been, and was informed in reply that 'as the object of the former instructions is now ceased, you should order Sir Peter Denis as well as Rear-Admiral Man to correspond for the future with your Lordships only.' It would seem that the Secretary of State assumed the power of giving orders when particular services or

important campaigns were in progress. We find the orders, for example, for the Commander-in-Chief in the Channel issued by the King on the occasion of the attempted invasion in 1744; also the orders for the Mediterranean squadron in the opening of the great campaign in the same year, while those for the western squadron were drafted and issued by the Admiralty. As late as 1807, when Lord Gambier was sent to Copenhagen, his *instructions* broadly outlining the objects of the expedition—co-operation with the King of Sweden, protection of reinforcements going to Pomerania, and protection of British trade and supplies of naval stores in the Baltic—were issued by the Admiralty, but he was directed 'to obey all such orders and instructions as you may from time to time receive from His Majesty through his principal Secretary of State for the War Department for the direction of your conduct in the service on which you are employed.' This service was the attack upon Copenhagen, and this attack that was to be made was unknown to the Board of Admiralty—a most singular inversion of order. For one might not unreasonably expect what may be called the broad aims of the squadron, political in nature, to be expressed by the Secretary of State, and the naval measures by which those ends were to be attained—an attack upon an enemy fleet—to be ordered by the Board of Admiralty. The only one of the Board, in fact, who knew that this military attack was intended was the First Lord, Lord Mulgrave, in his capacity as a member of the Cabinet. This was done to ensure secrecy, so many plans having miscarried through leakage.

It is certainly true that on broad issues of naval policy an experienced statesman's views will be valuable.

Lord Hardwicke and Lord Spencer furnish prominent instances. But it is possible for men to overestimate the value of second-hand knowledge. Lord Baltimore, a member of the Board of 1744, did not consider sea experience necessary for a knowledge of naval affairs. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'have hitherto been considered strangers to it, not that it requires any intense application or excellent abilities, but because the circumstances of their lives have offered them no opportunity of conversing with seamen and obtaining any information of maritime affairs; and perhaps, as in every other profession, the folly of some who could not and of others who would not explain them have raised a mist before this easy past of knowledge, and made what is plain and obvious in itself appear difficult and intricate and unattainable without long personal practice and experience.' Lord Baltimore's self-sufficiency is, however, best commented upon by the peculiarly unfortunate results of the operations at sea conducted by the Board of which he was a member.

Nevertheless, some support may be found for his opinion in a powerful quarter. Lord St. Vincent, writing in 1800, said it was incomprehensible to him why Lord Spencer, then First Lord, kept more than one seaman at the Board, as the only use of a seaman was to survey men for Greenwich Hospital. 'The fact is, Lord Spencer is now a better officer than any one of the three ever was.' But this explosion of the veteran Admiral can hardly be considered expressive of his real opinion, for when he himself took office as First Lord he brought two sea officers with him, making a total of three seamen on the Board; and it is not difficult to trace the real reason for his words in his dislike, and

indeed contempt, for the individuals concerned, and the Scottish nationality of two of them.[1]

Thus, the Admiralty Board of the eighteenth century by no means consisted exclusively of Executive Officers. The subordinate Boards consisted of naval officers and of civilians experienced in management with a seaman often, if not always, at the head of the Navy Board.[2] These subordinate bodies were the Navy, Victualling, and Sick and Hurt Boards. Their powers were created by letters patent, not derived direct from Parliament; nor did they take the whole work of Administration off the hands of the Board of Admiralty, for the supply of seamen, an 'administrative' function, always remained in the hands of the superior Board, in the same way as the analogous one of recruiting was vested in the Commander-in-Chief of the Army at the Horse Guards. Indeed, a criticism was made in the year 1795 by Sir John Sinclair to the effect that even then the Admiralty Board was too much engaged in administrative work to enable it to give adequate attention to the conduct of war.[3] 'The business of the Board of Admiralty,' he wrote, 'may be divided into five separate branches. The first relates to the building and equipping of His

[1] *Spencer Papers*, vol. iv.

[2] The Commissioners of the Navy Board in 1780 were:

Charles Middleton *	Comptroller.
Sir John Williams and Ed. Hunt .	Surveyors.
Geo. Marsh	Clerk of the Admiralty.
Timy. Brett, Wm. Palmer, Hon. W. Bateman, Sir Richd. Temple, E. le Cras,* Saml. Wallis.*	Commissioners and Principal Officers.
Paul Curry,* Hy. Martin,* Chas. Proby,* Sir Andrew Hammond,* John Laforey.*	Commissioners in Naval Yards.

* Naval Officers.

[3] *Thoughts on the Strength of the British Empire.*

Majesty's ships; the second to procuring seamen; the third to the providing a sufficient supply of wholesome provisions; the fourth to the arrangement and promotion both of superior and inferior officers; and the last to the proper destination of the fleet when prepared for service, and the obtaining authentic intelligence of the naval plans and operations of the enemy.

'On account of the great variety and multiplicity of the business above stated, it has been found necessary to establish two separate Boards for the first and third branches (known as the Navy and Victualling Boards), and perhaps it is the greatest defect in the present mode of conducting the naval business of the country that there is not a subordinate Board also for the second branch, namely, that of procuring seamen, which is not the least important or difficult of the whole. Were subordinate Boards established in the three first branches it is evident that the controlling Board of Admiralty itself might conduct the two remaining ones without having more business upon its hands than it is possible for it to execute.'

For that purpose Sir John proposed the formation of a Board, to be called the Marine Board, consisting of five commissioners, a secretary, and clerks.

Lord Barham, in the same year, considered a further subordinate Board needed to study new inventions, 'to digest and prepare the numberless propositions which naturally arise in a service which is in constant course of change and improvement.'[1] He proposed two scientific persons and one experienced flag officer. The Navy Board, he said, was so fully occupied with its daily duties as to exclude the possibility of giving

[1] *Thoughts on an Intermediate Board.*

attention to new discoveries ; and, further, if it had the leisure, the persons of whom it was composed were not qualified to judge of the subjects. This view received corroboration at a later date from Lord Napier, who pointed out that when chain cables were first proposed in place of hempen, the Navy Board rejected the idea as impracticable, and it was only through the efforts of Captain Samuel Brown, R.N., that they were introduced. When they were adopted it was found that they broke the anchors, and the Navy Board proved unable to design a suitable anchor, which was later done by another naval officer. ' It was the reproach of the Navy Board,' said Lord Napier, ' that inventors were not encouraged.' [1]

Thus, even in the eighteenth century the Admiralty was proving overburdened with work of an administrative character which diverted its attention from the higher questions concerning preparation for and conduct of the operations of war ; and the need for a Board of Inventions and Research, which was found necessary during the late war, was already being felt. Decentralisation, in fact, was in the air, yet all of these matters were thrown in 1832 upon the shoulders of the Board of Admiralty, whose responsibility for all administrative questions is collective and cannot be transferred to individual shoulders.

' Efficiency ' and ' economy ' were the twin fond catchwords used for breaking down this decentralisation and the important demarcation between administration and command. Efficiency, it was said by Sir James Graham, suffered under the old system because the subordinate Boards divided the power and thwarted the views of the Admiralty Board. Sir James claimed

[1] *Hansard*, xii. 1369.

that economy would result from the better supervision of expenditure, which would be brought about by amalgamation and from a decrease in numbers in the offices. To achieve these results the business of the whole naval service was to be divided into five departments: that of the Surveyor General for all matters of building and equipment of ships and for dockyards; the Accountant General for payments and supervision of the accounts of the Surveyors and Victualling Departments; the Storekeeper General for matters connected with stores; and the Victualling and Medical Departments for the duties indicated by their titles. In this list one notable omission from the business described by Sir John Sinclair is obvious—the duties connected with personnel and the operations of war. These, as we have seen, had hitherto been the duty of the Board of Admiralty, and they were still to form a part of the duties of the new Board in addition to the departmental duties described. As an independent superior Board, concerned primarily with the function of command, undisturbed by details of management, the Admiralty Board, as constituted through our long series of wars at sea, disappeared. Each department was now to have at its head a Lord of the Admiralty, and it was apparently supposed—if, indeed, the matter was given any thought, of which there is no positive evidence—that the work of planning and conducting war could be performed simultaneously with these departmental duties. That supreme function of the planning and direction of war, indeed, was not referred to once throughout Sir James Graham's long explanatory speeches of his scheme of reorganisation.

The fact, however, that it would prove impossible

for the Board to attend properly to the duties of what may be called 'command' did not wholly escape notice. Croker, who had been Secretary of the Admiralty for twenty-two years, stated during the debate in 1832 that we should have five Lords of the Admiralty so worn down by the fatigue of details as to be unable to look after the higher duties of their station. 'If they made this alteration, he could tell them that on the first rumour of war the whole would break down'—a prophecy the complete justice of which may be measured by the steps that were considered necessary in August 1914, and the events which followed.

Admiral Sir George Cockburn, strongly opposing the change on administrative grounds, said the same thing. 'Allowing that the Lords of the Admiralty were most anxious to attend to all the details, it would be impossible for them to do so and properly to discharge their other duties, particularly in war time, when the movements of the fleet would necessarily occupy so much of their attention.' Even from the administrative point of view, on which, mainly, the change was based, the scheme was, in Admiral Cockburn's opinion, bad. A Lord would be at the head of each department, but no Lords could possibly be held—as Lord Grey and the Cabinet of 1832 intended they should be—responsible personally. In any Board, responsibility must be collective. Real, individual responsibility could not, in practice, be enforced. What Admiral Cockburn foresaw as probable was that the permanent heads of departments would have the real management, for, since changes in the personnel of the Sea Lords were necessarily frequent, and tenure of office comparatively short, they could not acquire the detailed knowledge

which the permanent officials would possess, nor therefore the *real* power to control the business of the departments. The public would consider the Board responsible, but the real hands which moved the machinery would be the permanent officials.

Admiral Sir Byam Martin, looking at the question from the administrative point of view, considered it 'the most insane project that had lately been broached.' 'The very first beginning of war (I wish Sir James Graham may be the First Lord of the Admiralty when it takes place),' wrote Martin, 'will convince the Admiralty that they are utterly helpless without the assistance of an inferior department to attend to all the detail and drudgery of the duties of the civil branch of the Service. The Admiralty will have quite enough to do to give a sort of general supervision over the inferior department and to attend to the general directing duties which belong to them with reference to the fleets in all quarters of the globe.' Sir James was First Lord at the outbreak of the Russian war; and the justice of Martin's remark can be judged both by our experience then and at a later date. Other speakers condemned the making of a change by men whose experience at the Admiralty was limited to a short period of peace, and which was opposed by those who had experience of war; and most sensibly Mr. Pelham remarked that if defects existed in the conduct of the Administrative departments, as Sir James and other supporters of the measure averred, the best thing to do would be to find out what defects really existed and correct them, rather than interfere in an organisation which had stood the test of long experience of war. The scheme was indeed a part of a general scheme of what was called 'economy,' put into force

by men ignorant of the work of the offices or of the conduct of affairs in war. Its protagonists included many who, wholly unacquainted with the functions of the navy in war, supported their assertions (which it would be improper to call arguments) by such statements as 'we have more ships than we know what to do with,' and 'time enough to build when we want ships.' Simultaneously, the annual sums for replacement of stores were cut down, and the Government lived upon the stock in hand, thus procuring a reputation for economy. The suppression of the two Boards and their merger into the Admiralty was, as we have said before, supported also on the grounds of 'efficiency.' The sincerity of this claim is not inaptly illustrated by the appointment of the son of Lord Melville—one of Sir James Graham's political supporters—fresh from Harrow, to the Deputy Comptrollership of the Navy: an office hitherto held by an experienced naval officer.

That those, like Martin and Croker, who foresaw that the Lords would have an undue amount of work thrown on them, had good reason for their belief is further shown by the evidence given twenty-nine years later by Captain John Elliott, R.N., then Secretary of the Admiralty. The Lords, he said in 1861, worked at least ten hours a day. When asked whether in order to relieve the departmental Lords the First Lord would not give orders himself in case of their absence, Elliott replied categorically that he could not. The First Lord had no power vested in him personally. The power of Lord High Admiral was vested in the Board, and to give the First Lord power thus to act would be to vest in a single individual the power of Lord High Admiral. It would be most dangerous, he said, in time

of war, for a civilian to act without taking the advice of his naval colleagues.

It is not supposed that there were not both members and officers who supported the Bill, and had answers to these objections, administrative in particular. There was a strong feeling that the Navy Board exceeded its powers, and that decisions were made by clerks which required the knowledge and experience of seamen ; and this attitude of the Board unquestionably rankled, as many incidents show. In Captain Elliott's and other speeches an echo is recognisable of a remark by a Commander-in-Chief of ninety years earlier. This Admiral, Thomas Mathews, whose request for transporting anchors and moorings for warping out of Port Mahon had been refused by the Navy Board, had then written : 'To be sure their officers though bred from their infancy to a quill are much abler judges of what is wanting for the good of the service than Admirals and sea officers, who have experienced the want of them.' The naval officer at sea undoubtedly disliked the Navy Board, and many were glad to see it disappear and merge into the Admiralty, where, it was felt, decisions on naval matters were more likely to be made by naval men—though it is not easy to see why a naval officer as Controller, with a seat on the Admiralty Board, should make decisions differing from those made by a Barham or a Byam Martin as Controller at the head of the Navy Board. Corruption, as we know, had flourished. St. Vincent tried to stamp it out in the dockyards in 1802, and found an Augean stable very hard to cleanse. But that such corruption existed was rather a reason for reform in the departments than for overturning a system which, as many speakers in the debates in the House

said, had made the naval service of the country the greatest and the most efficient that had ever existed. One factor, at least, in its efficiency as a machine for war lay in the sound distinction that was made between Command and Administration, with the consequent possibility that they whose business it was to command were free to give attention, untrammelled by daily management of current business of a different nature, to the preparing plans for and conducting the operations of war. The extent to which the function of actual command was recognised as integral to the Admiralty Board in the early years of the eighteenth century is illustrated by the fact of the First Lord even serving at sea in command of the principal fleet. As First Lords, Lord Berkeley commanded a squadron in the Channel, and George Byng and Edward Russell the squadron in the Mediterranean; and Sir John Norris, in 1742, volunteered to take the Mediterranean command if he were made First Commissioner.

Whether the Navy Board had been so great a failure as its destroyers, to support their proposals for economy, argued is open to question. That it had been corrupt and full of abuses there is no doubt, but many of them were due to political jobbery and were unrelated to the principle of a separate Board.[1] That it was anathema to many a serving officer is equally true. But, as Admiral Bowles pointed out before the Committee on the Admiralty in 1861, the Navy Board had shown itself competent to fit out fleets with dispatch. At the time of the Spanish armament of 1790 the Press Warrants were issued on May 5. By mid-June twenty sail of the line were ready in Torbay; and in mid-August Lord

[1] Cf. *Letters of Lord Barham*, vol. ii.

Howe put to sea with thirty-one sail of the line, nine frigates and several sloops—a fitting out so rapid (slow though it may appear to us to-day) as to deter France from joining Spain. Again, in 1793, when a very low peace armament was maintained, a fleet of seventy sail of the line had been got to sea between March and December, and the force of seamen raised from 16,000 to 80,000. To these examples Admiral Bowles might have added that of the rapid preparation of a fleet in 1770 at the time of the Falkland Islands dispute. The comparison between these and our conditions at later dates, after the Graham 'reforms,' certainly gives no grounds for the claim made for the reforms on the score of efficiency. When the Syrian question arose, in 1840, we were able to send a force of ten sail of the line to the Mediterranean, and that so ill-manned that the French Commander-in-Chief, who had a similar number of ships, but all fully manned, asked permission to attack it, certain as he was that he could defeat it. Nor after twenty years had the new organisation made great improvements in efficiency. In 1853 war with Russia was clearly not far off. Yet in April 1854 we could only send seventeen sail of the line to the Baltic where the Russians had thirty; and to the Black Sea, where they had ten, we could only send eight. As to the force sent to the Baltic, Sir Charles Napier described it as the worst fleet ever sent to sea from this country at any time in its naval history. It was manned by raw men,[1] it was 'without mortar vessels, or gun-vessels, or any of those appliances

[1] Even administratively, for which such sacrifice in efficiency in command had been made, the record was bad in 1857. The *Renown* was detained for 172 days, when commissioned, for want of men (Evidence of Admiral Berkeley, 1861).

which a fleet sent to the Baltic should always have, and which it always had before.' Something clearly had happened in administration to produce this decline in efficiency since the armaments of 1790 or 1793. Either it was, as some suggested, the absence of a Navy Board whose duty it was to represent to the Admiralty the state of the ships, and the absence of such vessels as mortar boats and other essentials for war, or it was the fact that the Admiralty had become a purely Administrative Board, and its members so absorbed in the business of studying material and supplies as to have no time left for consideration of the question of the problems of the use of the fleet in war. According to Sir Charles Wood, it was the duty of the Controller to bring to the notice of the First Lord the disappearance, through decay, of such vessels as those referred to. The fact remains that it was not done, and the question still arises as to whose duty it was to study the requirements of a war in the Baltic or the Mediterranean on the only sound basis—that of *function*. The Controller was certainly capable of saying that we had more or less ships of any class than other Powers, and in what condition. He could furnish information on the material side, as he had been able to when head of the old Navy Board. But neither his position nor his employments would authorise him to say what the proper establishment should be, an establishment which must be based upon what those ships were required to do in war. The Duke of Somerset excused the shortage of small craft, which were needed in the Baltic for coastal operations, and in the Sea of Azov to interrupt the communications of the Russian army in the Crimea, on the naïve grounds that ' the Admiralty had been building ships of another

class,' and that the warfare in shallow waters was 'unexpected.' Yet Hyde Parker had known in 1801 that light draught vessels were needed in the Baltic; and the plea of unexpectedness is merely a confirmation of the charge of lack of foresight, due to the fact that preparation for war was no one's business.[1]

This absorption in Administrative business not only took the Board's attention away from the problems of strategy, but also from those of tactics, which, with the new steam navy then coming into existence, called for the closest study. Admiral Bowles stated in 1861 that he had not heard of a single exercise under steam in the Channel or Mediterranean. 'I have never heard,' he said, 'that they have been assembled for the purpose of exercise and of going through the new system of fighting with the sails furled and under steam.' Rear-Admiral Elliott was even more critical. 'I have never found any officer,' he replied, when asked if plans existed for attacking an enemy fleet, 'who could tell me what opinions he had arrived at on that subject; and I have heard nothing but the usual opinion that the subject requires ventilation, and that it cannot be ventilated without experimentalising on the subject. I think that the initiative should be taken at the Board of Admiralty, and I think that if you had a Lord there whose department it was solely to look after the fleet, and who was responsible for that fleet, and to whom the country would look, you would have found that this matter would have been brought to an issue long ago. But when it is not any particular person's duty, the whole

[1] Yet Sir Charles Napier had reminded them *five years* earlier 'that there are such seas as the North Sea and Baltic, where small ships of two or three decks, with a light draft of water, are indispensable.'

Board is responsible.'[1] But the Board unfortunately had its hands full, working its ten hours a day on the problems of material, manning and supply. There was assuredly ground in Lord Grey's charge in 1855 that 'the whole subject (of preparation for war in its fighting aspect) has not been considered together. A general scheme of the manner in which the war (1854) was to be conducted was not framed in the first instance, and there was a lack of foresight that produced at every phase the cry "too late!"'

The Board, in fact, as many officers of the day and later considered, became absorbed in detail, and at the same time, with the introduction of the telegraph, this detail increased. Centralisation grew apace. 'The Admiralty,' said Sir Thomas Cochrane in 1861,[2] 'centralised too much. They appointed an officer with the fine-sounding name of Commander-in-Chief, and leave him no authority whatever. They enter into detail in a way they used not to do. . . . A vast deal more might be left (to the Commanders-in-Chief and heads of Dockyards), and it would ease the Admiralty very much if they would confide more to the Commander-in-Chief and tell him what they wish to have done, and allow him to carry on the service in the way which he thought best.' Admiral Sir George Seymour expressed the same view: detail should be left to the heads of the various dockyards, and more power rest with the Commander-in-Chief. This may appear a side-issue. In reality it is closely connected with the whole question.

[1] 'Naval officers in general should have *some sort of knowledge as to what* will be required in a naval war' (Rear-Admiral Sir Geo. Elliott, 1861). The Board had done nothing to ensure such knowledge being developed.

[2] Select Committee on the Admiralty, 1861, p. 248.

The pressure of the business of management was steadily growing, and, in consequence of the change effected by the destruction of the demarcation between command and supply, so much fell upon those responsible for supply, and command only received Cinderella's portion. In the absence of a defined principle the Controller's position varied. He, who was responsible for economical expenditure, was made, in 1869, subordinate to the First Naval Lord, the member most interested in a large expenditure. Two years afterwards he was removed from the Board. Shortly afterwards he returned to it again; while the manner in which material —the Administrative side of the Admiralty—absorbed attention is shown by the appointment of an additional Lord, 'possessed of special *mechanical and engineering knowledge* as well as experience in the management of large private establishments'—an office fortunately abolished in 1885, but to which some representatives of the engineering profession would have us return to-day; showing thereby a lack of appreciation of the true function of an Admiralty Board.

Some insight as to the necessity felt for professional guidance in matters of operations, and as to the very subordinate place 'command' held in the estimate of the reformers of 1832, is furnished by an answer given by Sir James Graham. The question of the supremacy of the First Lord and the need for his consulting the Board in relation to operations had been raised, and Sir James had been asked whether it might not happen that if the naval officers of the Board were not consulted concerning a proposed expedition, the force sent might prove inadequate. To this he replied that the danger was 'completely guarded against' by the First Lord

being a member of the Cabinet. The fate of the Administration of which he was a member, their character, and even their safety against impeachment, depended upon proper precautions being taken by the Government, as an executive body ; and this risk to the Government was sufficient to ensure that no accident would be allowed to happen. The mentality exemplified in this answer would be ludicrous if it were not so serious. Not the fact that the success of the operation might be prejudiced and that the lives of thousands of men might be lost was the governing consideration, but that the existence of the Government of the day might be endangered ; and it is amusing to observe the belief that this danger to their own political skins would promote so active a sentiment of self-defence as to render it unnecessary to call upon professional men for their advice upon a purely professional subject. The whole episode illustrates with surprising clearness the belief entertained by many otherwise sagacious persons that the operations of war demand no particular study or apprenticeship, but may be undertaken by any ' intelligent ' person, or that strange creature who, calling himself a ' practical man,' prides himself on his ignorance of what he pleases to denote as ' theory.' The failures in the Baltic and Crimea showed the hollowness of the theory.

The need for differentiation between command and supply was felt immediately war broke out in 1914. The Admiralty War Group at the beginning of the struggle consisted of the First Lord, the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the Staff and the Secretary. To these were added, when the First Sea Lord wished, and on particular occasions, the Second Sea Lord, and certain special

advisers; and this developed later by the addition of Admiral Wilson and the Naval Secretary. Practically this amounted to an inner Board of Admiralty of the First Lord, four sea officers, with the Secretary; but of these, only the First Lord and the First Sea Lord were members of the Board of Admiralty. The Departmental Lords—the second, third and fourth Sea Lords—though they were not relieved from their responsibility, were not called into council. Their duty was confined to the administrative work of manning, building and repairs of ships, and supplies. What had taken place was not precisely what the many critics of the reforms of 1832 had foreseen. They had anticipated that the burden of looking after the operations would draw the Lords away from the business of supply. What occurred was that the burden of supply absorbed the Lords so fully that they could not conduct operations, and, as Admiral Sir Sydney Dacres had anticipated in 1871, additional officers had to be added to those responsible for that supreme work of direction. These additional officers were initially merely an unofficial reinforcement of the Board under the title of a War Staff Group, but without the responsibility of members of the Board. Later in the war a definite addition to the Board of two flag officers was made for the specific business of the conduct of the war, and the whole Board was divided into the two main branches of operations and administration; the latter forming, to all intents and purposes, subordinate Boards, though not so called, presided over by Lords of the Admiralty. Thus, only towards the end of the war we had returned in principle to the demarcation of Command and Administration which had existed prior to those 1832 ' reforms ' made in the names

of economy and efficiency. The claim for efficiency unquestionably falls to the ground, and in the light of the present National Debt, swelled as it is by our inability to bring the war of 1914–18 more quickly to a successful conclusion, it is not improbable that the claim for economy has proved equally unjustified.

THE PLACE OF HISTORY IN NAVAL EDUCATION

The limited provision made for instruction in, or study of, history before the war, indicates that this subject was not looked upon as one possessing any great importance in our fighting service—far less, for instance, than mathematics, engineering, physics or the technique of gunnery and torpedo. There was, indeed, but small belief in the value of the mental training which a study of history can be made to afford. The value was either ignored or denied even by many able officers. Provision was made for teaching something, though but little, and that of an elementary nature, of the facts of history; but none for a study of those facts, for using them as a vehicle for deducing principles, for awakening a knowledge of war, for furnishing some of that power of foresight which our unaided minds, however active they may be, are unable to provide. Parthenogenesis does not take place in the development of knowledge of war any more than in the development of life.

History, it is true, had begun to figure in certain stages of an officer's career. In the naval colleges at Osborne and Dartmouth more attention had been paid to it than formerly, and the principle upon which the instruction was based was sound. The earlier teaching at Osborne was of a biographical nature, suitable to the

early age of the cadets; the youngsters were taught something of the personalities, treated in their heroic aspect, with a view, largely, of evoking admiration for the great figures of the past. Later, at Dartmouth, the older cadets were given some idea of the part played by the navy in the wars, principally those of the eighteenth century, treated very broadly and with a view of starting the boys in life with some knowledge of what may be called 'general naval history.'

Primary education, and no more, was thus provided in naval history: and although occasionally, particularly in the early days of the colleges, there was a tendency to go beyond this and stray into disquisitions upon strategy and tactics which led to the expression of some very ludicrous opinions, the work which was being done was laying a fair foundation for later study, though necessarily of rather a light quality.

The end of the college career was, however, the end also of all instruction in history of a compulsory nature. For over ninety per cent. of officers this meant that this branch of their education never extended beyond the primary stage. It was not necessary for anyone, from the age of 17½, to open a book again or to increase his knowledge of war by the use of the only material available in peace—history. He might become an admiral without being able to define the first principles of naval strategy, or knowing how the navy exerted its influence in war.

In the early stages of the new scheme, arrangements were made that midshipmen should be permitted, and encouraged, to study 'voluntary' subjects at sea, of which naval history was one. This introduction of voluntary subjects was intended to stimulate the

midshipmen to develop in accordance with their natural aptitudes and mentalities; and it was considered that they would have time to do so, as it was supposed they would have received a thorough grounding in their theoretical work so that their training at sea would be confined to practice. It was intended that naval instructors should no longer be borne in sea-going ships, as it was argued that no further instruction in those subjects which fell to the naval instructor to teach would be required; and the saving of the cost of naval instructors was prominently put forward to balance the expenses which the 'new scheme' of education involved.

These hopes, however, proved illusive. The midshipmen came to sea knowing little more navigation than the midshipmen of *Britannia* days, and the naval instructor was reintroduced; the mathematics of gunnery and navigation had still to be taught; similarly, the young officers' knowledge of electricity was still inadequate. In consequence, the examinations at sea, which it had been intended should be of a purely practical nature, became increasingly theoretical, and it resulted that the period of service at sea was spent in training the midshipmen to pass examinations instead of training them to become seamen or officers. Little time was left even for such practical work as boat sailing, of acting as mate of a deck, or many of the occupations which played a great part in the sea training of some years ago; there was none for voluntary pursuits. In consequence, on the recommendation of the Custance Committee, the voluntary subjects were abolished, and in their place a prize for an essay upon an historical subject was introduced later, competition for which was open to lieutenants of less than five years' seniority.

In this competition subjects are announced some years in advance, and a choice is offered between one of a biographical nature and one dealing with a war, a campaign, or a series of operations. This is all to the good, but it affects only those very few officers who have a bent for historical or literary work. It may stimulate some of these to further research and study and prove of ultimate value in producing some naval historians—which we sadly lack, to our reproach, as the greatest naval Power. But it will not produce for many years—when some results may accrue from these possible naval historians of the future—any real effect upon the mentality of the service as a whole, or induce in the whole corporate body of naval officers bigger and broader powers of reflection upon the higher parts of their profession. This power history should and could supply.

The recognised educational system of the navy in its early stages is peculiarly deficient in two important elements. The humanities do not figure in it, and there is little to develop the power of thinking. We acquire some knowledge of facts about guns, ships, and other concrete subjects, but we are not trained to *reason*, nor are we taught anything about the conduct of war.

At a later stage, lectures on naval history were given at the War College, excellent lectures by the most qualified naval historian of the day. But the campaigns were not subjected to that critical examination, that close analysis of the operations by the officers themselves, which furnish the real value of history as an instrument in training for the higher ranks of the service. There is all the difference in the world between acquiring a knowledge of some facts, possibly of some principles by listening to lectures, and making a real *study* of history.

The one excites, perhaps, a more or less intelligent interest; the other trains the mind. 'The teaching of military knowledge,' said von Moltke, 'has, before all other objects, that of bringing the student to utilise his intellectual equipment, *and this is not possible without that reciprocal and quickening action which cannot be obtained when the master merely teaches and the student merely listens.*' Very true words these! Yet have not we confined ourselves nearly entirely to the mere teaching of, and listening to a recitation of, facts, instead of making use of the 'reciprocal and quickening action' of combined study and discussion? We have, in failing to appreciate the purpose to be served, failed to discover the means of making the best use of our material.

This is not peculiar to the navy, though the error goes deeper in our service than in others. 'This use of history (as a preparation for higher command) is not always understood,' wrote Colonel Maurice some years ago, 'even by officers, though almost all read military history and some study it. In this soldiers are not particular. In almost all professions there are more who seek to acquire a knowledge of facts than there are who draw deductions from those facts. Yet mere knowledge of facts is by itself of very little value, and probably of less value to the soldier than others.' [1]

It is, indeed, not merely for the sake of knowing what was done in previous wars that history is studied. Such knowledge by itself is (and here I differ from the above words of the writer just quoted) of value; it furnishes precedents and suggestions. But unless the

[1] *The Value of the Study of History as a Training for Command in War*, Lieut.-Col. F. Maurice. Naval and Military Essays. (Cambridge University Press.)

facts are subjected to analysis, there is always a risk that a man's habit of mind will degenerate into a pedantic state, that he will be governed by catchwords reminiscent of the mystic Selvagee of the Bab Ballad. Knowledge of the old methods is certainly useful, but only in so far as the possessor is capable of making use of it.

Marshal Foch tells us how history can be made use of. 'Let us examine,' he says, 'the facts which history gives us. In order to understand this complex phenomenon, war, under the numerous shapes it assumes, let us take those facts, one after the other, let us examine them as closely as we can; let us resort to micro-biology, and let us do this while placing ourselves in the midst of the circumstances in which those facts arose; time, place, temperature, fatigue, numerous depressing causes, misunderstandings, etc. . . . Let us see the difficulties they (the commanders) had to conquer, and how they overcame them. Let us discuss the decisions taken, the results obtained; let us treat the question anew. Then only shall we see the moral factors, so often mentioned, appear during the whole course of the study in their right proportions. Then only shall we be able to take them into account and to ascribe to them their due place in the result.' [1]

So in using naval history as a medium for education in our higher military knowledge, preparation for higher command and directions in war, we need to study all the distracting and conflicting elements which constitute a situation, to try to place ourselves in the position of the commander, and to look upon the situation as he looked upon it. A mere list of the ships of each belligerent affords no more idea of a strategical situation

[1] *The Principles of War*, pp. 6, 7.

than the number of ships necessary for conducting an operation is governed by the number of ships of the enemy; nor does a series of diagrams of a battle which set out the movements made, furnish an adequate conception of a battle; for we need also to know why the commanders acted as they did. Criticism of sea-commanders would be more restrained, more sober and more weighed, if we had acquired the habit of seeking for the motives which have governed their actions, acquainted ourselves fully with the instructions they were given, and the conditions in which they were acting, and were, in fact, fully seised of all the factors which governed their decisions. By the *study* of history, by employing the 'micro-biological' method, we train ourselves to weigh these matters, and while we are doing so we are training our minds to weigh similar problems when they fall to us to solve, instinctively to select the critical objects and to put our fingers upon that or those elements of the problem upon which all others hinge; and so to guide our steps truly and directly towards the heart of the question.

This cultivation of the habit of looking for the essential aim is of the utmost value; it tends to become instinctive. We separate out from the confusing mass of claims the object aimed at, and, with principles at our fingers' ends, know how to bring about its attainment. We no more go through processes of thought, and 'whys' and 'wherefores,' than does a footballer who refrains from passing in his own twenty-five. We have done the reasoning beforehand and are sure of our judgment. Such a condition of mental activity and alertness is not a natural one. It is the result of training, and the training proper to its development is to be obtained by

an intensive study of war in history. In order to be able to take rational decisions, we should, said Moltke, 'develop freely, practically, artistically, the mind and the will, with the help of a previous military culture resulting either from the study of history or from one's own experience.' Although the late war will have afforded much experience to many of us, it will not have given all kinds of experience. Our own is not enough: we must make use of that of others as well. This experience is preserved for our use in the pages of history —the history of this war and of those of the past. Every articulate military thinker, from Frederick the Great to Foch, has placed this study on the highest plane as a mental gymnastic for a military officer. Can we continue to neglect their advice?

It may possibly be objected that these authorities are all, or nearly all, military men, using the word 'military' in its narrow sense; that naval men, guided by 'practical common sense,' have got on very well and conducted naval wars to successful conclusions through three centuries without a great naval literature or any study of wars of the past. This would be inaccurate both as a statement of fact and as a deduction. More than once Britain has been 'Mistress of the Seas rather by the weakness of her enemies than by her own disciplined strength, and has drawn from that mastery no adequate results.'[1] Our wars have not always been conducted with skill; witness, for instance, those of the Austrian Succession, American Independence, and the Baltic in 1854. But it also leaves out of account the almost unbroken centuries of war in which the great commanders whose names are household words passed

[1] Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power upon History*, p. 269.

their days. These men carried the history of preceding wars in their own persons. Before Rodney commanded in 1782 he had served in responsible positions in the two preceding wars; and others were in a like case. Yet even then nothing is more common than to find these veterans harking back to the time before their personal experiences, referring to precedent and making deductions therefrom. Thus Vernon, in his advocacy of the formation of a Western Squadron in 1745, refers to the practice in Queen Anne's wars; Norris, opposing a proposal to use the fleet to force the narrow fortified channel into Ferrol, supports his opinion that such operations must always be of a combined nature with precedents from Cartagena, Cadiz, Camaret Bay, Vigo, and Rio de Janeiro. So, a hundred years later, B. J. Sulivan in the Baltic (1854–6) confutes the arguments of those who wish the entrance to Cronstadt forced, by quoting the experiences of Saumarez at Algeciras, Nelson at Teneriffe[1] and Calvi, and other commanders off Toulon and Cadiz. Hawke, preparing his attacks on the French coast in 1758, makes a note to examine the measures taken for the landing at Cartagena in the earlier war. Suffren makes a profound study of de Ruyter's tactics, and of the campaigns under his own two predecessors, Labourdonnais and d'Aché. Indeed, anyone who reads the memoirs of the old wars is well aware that the naval commanders of those days, besides being the possessors of a great tradition handed on by word of mouth—itself an innate application of precedent—

[1] 'If Sir Robert Peel had studied the naval history of the French War he would have learnt that Nelson never attacked a battery with ships except very slightly the first day at Teneriffe, when, thinking it impossible to succeed that way, he gave it up and tried to carry the place by storm.'—*Life and Letters of Sir B. J. Sulivan*, p. 203.

were at pains to acquaint themselves with the measures and methods used by their predecessors.

Possibly, while all this may be admitted, the objection may still be made that all these commanders used the same material, or material differing so little that what was applicable to the seventeenth century was equally applicable to the middle of the nineteenth; and that (as was in fact once said to the present writer by a statesman) in these days of wars with modern battleships, 30-knot cruisers, torpedoes, long-range guns and wireless telegraphy, there can be no lesson to be learned from campaigns in which the instruments were wooden sailing ships with guns whose random shot was but 1400 yards. The difficulties and dangers Napier foresaw in the attempt to force Cronstadt, based upon the difficulty of approach by ships, the superior powers of laying a shore gun, the resisting powers of a fort or earthwork compared with those of a ship, were the same as those which prevented Blake from destroying the forts at Santa Cruz, rendered fruitless Lestock's attack upon St. Louis Castle (1741), and Hervey's on the Morro (1762), and drove Saumarez back from Algeciras with the loss of a ship. How, it may justly be asked, can the results of these actions be treated as yielding any lessons for our conduct with long-range guns, modern spotting, freedom of movement, and armoured ships?

Yet they do. As the range of the ship's gun has increased, so has that of the shore gun; the relative power of each is unchanged, whether they are 12-pounders, 42-pounders, or 15-inch. The shore gun then had the advantage in laying, so it has to-day; the targets which must be hit are still the gun on shore—a very small object—and the whole ship at sea—a very

big one. The fort is as difficult to destroy by direct fire as it ever was; high-angle fire is as necessary to-day as it was when Knowles mounted a cohorn on his poop to drop shell into the Morro and Port Louis, or Sulivan pointed out the need for mortars in an attack upon fortresses. The bomb ketch was succeeded by the gunboat, the gunboat by the monitor; but they all represent the application of the same principle. Yet, in spite of all this wealth of precedent, officers are to be found who believe that battle ships must carry heavy guns in order to enable them to bombard fortresses!

By understanding the *reasons* for the views of the seamen of the past, we are less likely to make misleading analogies such as those between the destruction of the forts at Liége and a similar operation carried out by ships against forts.

Whether, however, we take as an example of the permanence of principles such an one as that of the methods of forcing an entrance into a defended harbour or strait, or the larger ones of defence against invasion, coastal operations, the attack and defence of trade, the manner in which sea-command is exercised, the functions of ships of the line, cruisers and flotillas, or any other of the main branches of naval warfare, the study of the principles observed or recognised by sea-commanders in all times will furnish guiding marks for us to-day and to-morrow. Whether the vessel employed upon inshore observation be a 36-gun frigate, a 64-gun ship, a submarine or airship, the same objects are in view; the same general principles will govern conduct. The problem of the conduct of an officer in charge of a convoy is the same whether the escort be composed of 50-gun ships, armed merchant vessels or destroyers. He still

has, as his principal object, the safe transference of the convoy from its point of departure to its destination; and how far he must accept or refuse action, scatter his convoy, continue in pursuit of an attacker whom he has driven off, or attempt its complete destruction, are all questions which can be referred to a guiding principle which can—as it is in military operations on shore—be defined and expressed to embrace whatever material is employed in the operation. It is not without interest to observe that, in the early days of convoy work, escorting officers had no guidance as to their tactical conduct; but that, subsequent to the loss of two destroyers in attacking a superior force, instructions were issued which corresponded very closely in principle with the accepted principles of convoy defence in the eighteenth century. Indeed, in no phase of the war at sea has there been a more remarkable return to precedent than in commerce defence. But how dearly the lessons were learnt! To say therefore that the study of the past has nothing which can help us to-day is to blind oneself to the whole and palpable evidence of events.

The lessons of history are not confined to strategy; they extend equally to tactics. The results of the use of offensive, as compared with defensive, tactics, are to be found in the long series of battles from the seventeenth century onwards; the necessity for co-operation of all arms can be seen in the different results obtained from fireships when used upon a system of co-operation instead of at haphazard; the importance of a thorough understanding of the intentions of the commander, of individual initiative, of refusing to acknowledge defeat, are to be found in the impressive pages of the old wars. Abundant illustrations of these and other governing

factors can be used to drive home into the inner consciousness of young officers the secrets of success, to drive them home, indeed, in such a way that they become so much a part of an officer's nature that, when he is faced with a difficult situation, he instinctively puts away from him the temptations to follow what appears to be the safe course. As an example of this, we may take Lord French's description of his position on August 24, 1914. 'It is impossible for anyone who has not been situated as I was,' he writes,[1] 'to realise the temptation which such a place (Maubeuge) offers to an army seeking shelter against overpowering odds. For a short time . . . I debated within myself whether or not I should yield to this temptation; but I did not hesitate long, because there were two considerations which forced themselves prominently on my mind.

'In the first place I had an instinctive feeling that this was exactly what the enemy was trying to make me do; and in the second place, I had the example of Bazaine and Metz in 1870 present in my mind, and the words of Sir Edward Hamley's able comment upon the decision of the French Marshal came upon me with overwhelming force. Hamley described it as "the anxiety of a temporising mind which prefers postponement of a crisis to vigorous enterprise"; of Bazaine he says: "In clinging to Metz he acted like one who, when the ship is foundering, should lay hold of the anchor." I therefore abandoned all such ideas and issued orders at about 3 P.M. directing the retreat some miles farther back to the line le Cateau-Cambrai.'

There, indeed, we may say that at a critical moment history was a powerful support in coming to a right

[1] *1914*, pp. 70, 71.

decision. Is it not possible that we shall find, when the history of the war is finally written, that naval commanders have found themselves faced with equally difficult situations for which precedents existed which could serve them in making their decisions?

Again, in spite of the employment of new material to a hitherto undreamt-of extent in war on shore, we find Marshal Foch approving a reprint of his book, written many years ago, in which soldiers are advised to study history. Aeroplanes, tanks and gas, unheard of before, have been employed; barbed wire and heavy guns and high explosive have played a part beyond the imaginations of most men; wireless telegraphy and field telephones have replaced the galloper. Yet the Marshal, in spite of these changes, seeks the solution of the ever-changing problems of war in 'an intellectual gymnastic based upon the study of history.' If this is true of military operations on land, is it not probably equally true of those at sea?

Changes in naval *matériel* since the Napoleonic wars have indeed been prodigious; but can we say that they have been greater in degree than those in military *matériel*? The ranges of ships' guns are greater, but so are the ranges of field guns and rifles. Wireless telegraphy has affected the land as well as the sea. A naval battle to-day—a battle between fleets—covers more space and engages more pendants than the First of June or Trafalgar, though not many more pendants than those of the seventeenth century; but so also a land battle has grown more than proportionally greater. Ships move at greater speed; so do armies, transported by rail and motor-car. The land as well as the sea is sown with mines: an *Audacious* is blown up in one

element, a Messines ridge on the other; and while communications at sea are rendered precarious by the submarines, those of armies on land are hampered by long-range bombardment (as in the siege of Verdun and the operations round Ypres) or aircraft.

The difficulties with which the navy has had to contend in relation to changes of *matériel* are thus not greater than those of the armies, and we cannot excuse ourselves for the heavy losses of our mercantile marine, as compared with the losses of past wars (the end of which not infrequently found us with a greater merchant fleet than the beginning), on the grounds that new weapons had effected such changes, or were so untried that risks could not be run. A prophylactic to every disease is found sooner or later, and the time required for discovering and developing it depends principally upon the manner in which the investigation is pursued. Nostrums and empirical methods are dead in medicine; the cause is sought for by means of patient research, reasoning, and the application of carefully garnered and sifted evidence. The habit of mind and the powers of reasoning and imagination will never be developed by an education the aim of which is solely to instil a knowledge of facts, only too often by rules of thumb or *memoria technica*. Naval education to-day, with its system of examinations, and promotion for examination results, furnishes an inadequate and in many ways an improper preparation for high commands and offices in the navy; no less inadequate, indeed, than any purely technical training must be, as Collingwood so often pointed out in his correspondence. 'If he (a boy of whom he is writing) be sent immediately to sea, he may become a good sailor, but not qualified to fill the higher

offices of his profession, or to make his way to them.' And to another: 'Read—let me charge you to read. Study books that treat of your profession and of history. Study Faulkner's Dictionary and borrow, if you can, books which describe the West Indies. . . . Wisdom does not come by instinct, but will be found when diligently sought for.' The absence of the humanities is a serious one; and that sole humanity that finds a place does not reach beyond the elementary stage of memorisation of accounts and events, these events themselves covering only a partial and educationally inadequate ground. We are told that our officers must be 'scientific,' and the word 'science' is confined to the limited scope of natural science or mathematics. The fact that there is a science of war is ignored.

The primary education, furnished as hereinbefore described, cannot do this. Secondary or higher treatment of the subject is also needed. To some extent a beginning was made by sending officers to Cambridge, where the young naval officer can obtain the benefit of the services of the Professor of Naval History—a professorship instituted by private means. An opportunity of acquiring a more thorough knowledge was thus afforded, but the course was not compulsory. Optics, mathematics and certain 'scientific' subjects were compulsory, but not naval history, the foundation of knowledge of naval war. In all this it is impossible to avoid comparison with the course of instruction at the French Académie de Marine of 1752, where mathematics and science were the elder sisters, and war only a poor Cinderella. 'There they were to learn hydrography, navigation, construction of instruments, naval architecture, medicine—even botany. As to military studies,

they were introduced only in an anecdotal and picturesque historical form and did not extend beyond a recapitulation of "facts." '[1] We know what the results were; they appear in the fruitless combined Channel cruise, in the campaigns in the West Indies, in the disjointed operations of the French and Spanish fleets, in the reluctance to risk their ships shown by d'Estaing, de Grasse and Guichen, in the lack of support Suffren received from his captains.

What, then, is needed at this stage of the officer's education is to make history compulsory. A course dealing with war has been instituted. The closest relationship between the historical and strategical courses should exist. But before doing this we must be clear in our minds as to what should be the object of the history course. It is not merely to teach the officers what happened at sea in the wars that are studied; it is to open the minds of the officers to an understanding of the navy as an instrument of policy. The historical lecturer can well bring this out; there lies his proper sphere of thought. He is not, in virtue of being an historian, a strategist or a tactician, but an exponent in the course of events of causes and results on a large scale in which home and foreign policy and the employment of naval and military force play their parts at all phases of the struggle. If he should confine his attention purely to the naval, or to the naval and military, operations, his teaching will lose the greater part of its value. He may indeed be tempted into discussions on minor strategy, he may even be tempted into criticism of tactical matters and doctrines, and in so doing, while he would wander outside the sphere proper to him, he would be unable

[1] Castex, *Les idées militaires de la Marine du XVIII^e Siècle.*

to take that wide survey for which he is eminently fitted. We need more knowledge of the broader and bigger parts of war. All young men should have their intelligences opened to its many-sidedness. It was common to hear, at the beginning of the war, many officers say that if the 'blockade' had been left in the hands of the navy and not interfered with by the 'politicians,' we should have crushed the enemy sooner. This view left out of account how large a part political factors play, and how much of any operations of a like character is of a legal and diplomatic nature. It was not the seamen of the day who arranged the Orders-in-Council with which this country replied to Napoleon's Decrees, nor they who drew up the earlier Rule of 1756, or laid down and interpreted Prize Law; nor was it by seamen only that the great system of cutting off Germany in the recent war by the extension of contraband was devised and introduced in a manner which avoided bringing the powerful neutral states against us. We have, indeed, a lesson from Germany to take to heart—if we need one—as to the result of a purely military or naval policy overriding political considerations, as in the questions of the Peace of Brest Litovsk and the submarine campaign; and a counterpart to this lesson in the story of the Armed Neutralities.

While the historical professor is expounding the broad, general lines of the naval share of the wars with which he deals, the staff officer in charge of the war course should explain the principles of strategy and tactics, using history to illustrate the application of those principles. He will need to divide up naval war into its several branches, showing what the navy has to do, and the methods in which it is used. Thus there are two broad

main divisions of subjects, offensive and defensive, and some which apply equally to each category. Among offensive we have the transport of armies and the different measures used for securing the safety of the army when embarked, *e.g.* occupation of the line of passage, distant cover, escort, occupied areas, and the circumstances to which each is applicable; the attack upon trade, first showing the place it holds and has ever held in national strategy, of its effects, then the different measures used —blockade, cruising squadrons, cruising ships, contraband laws, stiffening of light squadrons with heavy ships, boarding and examination of ships; attacks upon oversea possessions, and their place in naval strategy; attacks upon defended ports or passages; diversionary attacks and their place both in the offensive and defensive; coastal attacks and landings, the manner in which they have been carried out; the types of vessels and other material that have been proved valuable; the function of bases in the offence upon trade; and the effect of an offensive and threatening strategy in inducing a defensive attitude on the part of the enemy. The principles of all of these can be copiously illustrated and their dry bones made alive by the use of history.

Of defensive branches of war there are the defence against invasion, with its main broad principles, the functions of the vessels employed, the association between the two services and their responsibilities; the defence of trade in all its many manifestations—convoy, cruising, capture of enemy bases, routeing, landfalls, hunting, disguising, recognition signals, insurance; in all of which the old methods and their modern applications can be drawn upon; defence of oversea possessions and bases, and the function of bases in defence of trade;

the theories of coast defence by fortresses, guns, coast-defence ships and *défenses mobiles*, with the advantages or disadvantages of each, and the principles which explain why the measures are advantageous or disadvantageous; and the great lesson of how often defensive measures taken by an enemy are mistaken for offensive measures.

Allied to both of these are the great questions of leadership, command, centralisation and decentralisation, initiative, personal and moral courage, the fault of 'making pictures.' The offensive, concentrations of effort, both in strategy and tactics, surprise, the phases of action—attack, demoralisation and pursuit—the principles of military obedience, the nature of orders and of instructions, the need of informing subordinates, the characteristics of good reconnaissance, the high importance of seamanship in its widest applications, the value of knowledge other than professional—to all of which young men's minds should be opened if they are to be capable of profiting from their own reading and develop themselves fully as officers.

All of these subjects constitute an integral part of the education of a naval officer—indeed they are more truly a part of 'naval education' than are mechanics and mathematics, which are better classed under the heading of 'instruction.' Not only is history the only living source of information on these matters, but only by illustration, furnished from the record of actual events, can the importance and the effects of these moral qualities be impressed upon persons, and the lessons grafted upon their souls. The repetition of mere platitudes will influence men no more than the proverbial philosophy of Martin Tupper. But men can be seised of the

importance of swift decision and of a courageous and offensive spirit if they have examples of the victory which they have brought about, and see how far more often over-boldness is rewarded by resounding success than by disastrous failure—nay, how often, as at Marengo, failure which appeared imminent has been turned into victory. The truth that victory or defeat is moral and that he only wins who believes he will win, and is defeated when he believes himself defeated, can be pressed home by endless examples, of which none are more striking than the battles of Hughes against his great adversary, Suffren, or the First Battle of Ypres in the late war. It is very far from unimportant to impress these supreme truths, for the age is a mechanical one, big battalions and big guns are falsely believed to be the only means of victory, and only recently a 'naval expert' has questioned the statement that the main object in battle is to make the enemy believe he is beaten. The German navy, by the refusal of the Kaiser, von Pohl, von Müller and others to send it to sea, tacitly accepted defeat. They believed they were beaten, and were. 'Hoffman has to-day,' wrote Tirpitz, on January 14, 1915, 'told me a good deal about the fleet that isn't at all reassuring. Unless some radical cure is found soon, nothing will be done, and we expect to beat England to-day.'

The formation of military character is more important to a fighting man than any mechanical attainments. Good mechanics, clever inventors, highly trained mathematicians are to be hired at small cost in the open markets of the world—the many universities and workshops turn them out by hundreds—but men who combine the qualities of seaman, statesman, strategist, tactician,

leadership and character, are far from common. Many of these qualities are inborn, but even when inborn must be cultivated and developed. It is perfectly correct to say that the great commander, like the poet, 'nascitur non fit'; but Mahan's comment [1] upon our greatest naval commander is equally important to remember: 'Genius is one thing, the acquirements of an accomplished (instructed) officer are another, yet there is between the two nothing incompatible, rather the reverse; and when to the former, which nature alone can give—and to Nelson did give—is added the conscious recognition of principles, the practical habit of viewing under their clear light all the circumstances of a situation, assigning to each its due weight and relative importance, then, and then only, is the highest plane of military greatness obtained.' A man, even of genius, Mahan points out in commenting upon the campaigns of 1796, is 'hampered in the conclusions of actual life by the lack of that systematic ordering and training of the ideas which it is the part of education to supply.' [2]

Nowhere, hitherto, have we in the navy made any attempt worth the name to train the minds of our officers at an age when it is possible to impress upon them the great principles of war; nor, indeed, has the writer ever seen any attempt to educate in those moral lessons referred to in the last of the categories above. Yet can their importance be denied? And if they are important, if battles are lost or won, provinces conquered, empires extended or reduced, by the moral and military qualities of the commanders, is it not as important to pay attention to the development of these qualities as to the

[1] *Life of Nelson*, 2nd edition, p. 199.
[2] *Ibid.*

differential calculus or the design of a valve? And is it to be done without quoting examples?

A French writer has said that the personality of a military commander is the product of two elements—character and knowledge; moral element and intellectual element. On the one hand we have the man as he is, with his natural qualities and defects the outcome of personal, hereditary, atavistic influences—the individual undiluted. On the other we have all that experience of life, study, and education can bring about to modify his primary ideas, by the incessant influence of their daily teaching.[1] Experience, study and education are here given as the three moulding influences, and all of these are needed if the highest results are to be obtained. Experience, the best of all, can only be had by practical work,[2] but experience of war cannot normally be obtained. 'The more an army is deficient in the experience of warfare, the more it behoves it to resort to the study of war as a means of instruction and as a base of instinctives . . .; although the history of war cannot replace acquired experience it can nevertheless prepare for it. In peace time it becomes the true means of learning war and of determining the fixed principles of the art of war.'[3] Study and education remain.

[1] Castex, *Les idées militaires de la Marine du XVIII^e Siècle*.

[2] Hence the absurdity of many of the present methods of teaching seamanship, which, as they are not practical, do not produce seamen, but persons capable of answering questions only. It is singular to observe that after the armistice, when the first practical opportunity occurred of giving seamanlike experience to young officers by sending them to mine-sweeping vessels, this opportunity was missed, and a special corps of officers and men was enlisted from without to do what was undoubtedly the navy's work; while the midshipmen of the fleet sat in the fore-cabins of the ships, moored for months in harbour, being lectured to or poring over seamanship and other books, to enable them to pass examinations.

[3] Marshal Foch, *Principles of War*.

Study will be, in most cases, unfruitful unless preceded by education which can point the way, guide the footsteps, and suggest the means. The time for study is in the early stages of a man's life when his mind has developed but is still inquisitive, receptive, doubtful, perhaps iconoclastic; and that time arrives precisely when the young officers are of the age of their brothers at the University, and drop, for the time being, material and technical employments, mix with men of other upbringing and broader minds that have reached a stage at which they are more capable of absorbing and developing ideas than they ever have been before or are likely to be afterwards; and history is the medium.[1]

[1] The above article carries us as far as the junior lieutenant, and does not touch upon the subsequent higher courses for staff officers, in which, if the still more intensive study of particular campaigns, which is presumably already made, is to bear full fruit, more groundwork than now exists is needed.

THE USE OF HISTORY

In the ordinary affairs of life we base our actions—consciously or unconsciously—on experience. If we have none of our own we use that of others. History is the record of the experiences of others.

The instruments of war have changed so much that it may well be questioned whether the experience of past wars at sea has any value for us to-day. When the present writer was serving on a Committee, charged with the duty of considering the formation of an Historical Section, he was asked by Lord Morley, a member of the Committee, of what use it could possibly be in these days of Dreadnoughts, submarines, aircraft and so forth to study the operations of fleets of three-deckers, frigates, brigs and their like. It appeared so impossible that lessons of the one could be applicable to the other.

The experience of our predecessors is of use in so far as the conditions of the experience correspond. There are many conditions in past wars that correspond with those of to-day. War consists of several elements, and into all of these there enter principles. Those principles are permanent, and those who study history find a wealth of instruction in the application of those principles.

The making of war may be broadly divided—though no hard and fast line can be drawn—into its two phases,

strategy and tactics. It is worth considering each of these to discover whether a study of history can do anything to educate or train the mind and character.

The highest stratum of strategy is that which deals with the manner in which one nation or group of nations tries to force an opponent or opponents to accept its claims or to abandon claims of its own. The history of past wars illustrates this. It shows how this or other countries made use of all those elements in its national life—its naval strength, military forces, geographical position, commercial strength, possessions abroad—to compel or contribute towards compelling compliance of an enemy. Is there nothing stimulating to the mind and imagination in the study of how those who had to use our national forces thought out their problem, used or misused the weapons they possessed? We find disputes between differing schools of thought as to whether we should make our greatest effort at sea and oversea, using our small army and our great sea-power against France or Spain or America or against their seaborne commerce; or whether our efforts should be mainly on land in the Low Countries or Germany.

Six winter months our Senate sits
  Five millions for to raise,
And all the while they rack their wits
  To find out means and ways.

Six summer months our Hero spends
  In what you'll please to say
Is finding out of ways and means
  To squander all away.

Was the critic of William III right in his condemnation of William's continental strategy? Did the idea of making war at sea represent a more economic and

advantageous way of achieving the national object, or not? The differences of 1696 were repeated in 1746, when the same divergence of view comes prominently to the front: and in the early stages of the late war we had Mr. Gibson Bowles calling out 'Back to the sea,' and citing the wars of the Spanish Succession, the Seven Years War, the American war and the great war with France, to show how far more effectual and helpful England can be to her allies if she wages war mainly at sea.[1] The difference between 'Easterners' and 'Westerners' is a mere repetition of these old, but perennial, differences. Should we not study to clear our minds on these points, and is not history the only source wherein to find our witnesses?

The same idea may be found in the controversies over Pitt's expeditions to the West Indies. Was it well or ill to send the troops thither? Would they or not have been better used if sent to France? Yet how many who condemn the sugar island snatching policy can give an intelligible account of the conditions which led Pitt to conduct war in that way? And without knowing his reasons, how is it possible to express an opinion?

But does an opinion matter? Does it matter one penny whether one knows why Pitt sent men to die in thousands of yellow fever, or whether one thinks him right or wrong? In a utilitarian sense it may be that it does not matter at all. But it does matter that one should have exercised one's mind to think, trained it to weigh the pros and cons, prepared it so that if analogous decisions have to be made it should possess some solid foundations on which to base opinions. The man who

[1] *Candid Review*, November 1915.

can only say 'the younger Pitt's expeditions to the West Indies were futile side shows, for such and such an historian says they were,' or 'the elder Pitt's expeditions to the coast of France were admirable and effective, for such and such another says they were,' is of no use. He is merely repeating what other men say. If he has no opinion of his own, he will find that the making of a decision, and the stating of his reasons for it, are very hard, possibly impossible. To fall back upon other men's views will not help him; a gramophone would be as useful a member of a War Council as he. But one who has studied these things, who has determined to form his own opinion from such evidence as the imperfect histories can furnish, is in a very different situation. He is far more likely to be able clearly to see the object to be attained, and to appreciate the course of action best calculated to attain it. Catchwords are not his masters, but his servants, for he knows how they have come into existence, how far they represent a truth, and what qualifications are necessary in accepting them.

The facts that these wars were fought with muzzle-loading guns, with flint locks, in ships depending on the variable winds, make no difference to the principle as to whether we should, in our peculiar position, make our greatest effort in the Cockpit of Europe or elsewhere: it makes no difference in the solution of the question 'Is it the function of the army to assist the navy to get command at sea, or the function of the navy to carry the army whither it wishes to go?' The instrument may vary the measures; changes in land transport affect the problem; but the fundamentals remain the same. We still are an island nation, depending for our existence upon the maintenance of our export and import trade,

and possessing colonies or having association with Dominions whose interests are bound up with ours. Security in the dividing seas, or (to put it better) making those seas a secure connexion between the several parts, is the primary condition of our existence to-day as it was one hundred or two hundred years ago. A force adequate to ensure that security is necessary, and the general principles on which it obtains and maintains it are not different whether the vessel which occupies the necessary routes or stations is a sailing vessel, an engined vessel which moves on the surface, under the surface, or above the surface. The same disasters will follow such mistakes as dissipation ot strength, mistaken objects, missed opportunities, omission to concentrate at the decisive point and so forth, whether the vessels used to command be 44-gun ships or aircraft.

The Havana expedition of 1762 provides an object lesson of the whereabouts of 'the decisive theatre,' and a corrective to the blind acceptance that the main theatre, or the main centre of concentration, is necessarily the decisive theatre. Spain, it will be recollected, came late into the war. Our statesmen, our naval and military men, had to decide what action would most surely, and with the least expenditure of effort on our part, convince her that it was not to her interest to fight against us. Should we attack her in Europe, blockading her ports on the Atlantic, or in the Mediterranean? Or cruise, in the Elizabethan manner, in the focal area of the Azores? Or attack her possessions in the East or West Indies? Which theatre is decisive? Which would produce the most immediate and compelling effects, and in which could we exercise most effectually

the powers we possessed, while she could find most difficulty in meeting us with counter-measures? Where, in fact, was she most vulnerable to our form of strength? Could we discern a spot the retention of which was vital to Spain: and, if so, could we concentrate superior force at that vital, and therefore decisive, point with secrecy and get the benefits of surprise, while retaining security elsewhere? Or must we, in view of this addition to the naval strength of our enemy, abandon the offensive and place ourselves on the defensive? Which was the stronger form of war? All this comes out in a study of the strategy of the Havana expedition: and the lessons of all of it are independent of technique.

Study of the workings of the minds of the proved strategists stimulates, if it does not actually procreate, ideas. It opens up one's mental vision, it widens one's strategic horizon. Methods of forcing an enemy into an impasse, or extricating oneself from one, appear, which—in the case of most of us—would never have occurred to ourselves. We see, in history, how the Masters of War have tackled their problems. Would it not be something approaching impudence to pretend that we can learn nothing from them, that we are self-sufficient in ourselves?

I am not advocating confining a study to any period. All periods are our oyster. The strategy of the more recent wars is no less rich in educational value. To study how the Japanese proposed to attain their ends in their war with Russia, and how the Russians proposed to attain theirs, and how one succeeded and the other failed, and the reasons for success and failure, is to increase one's capacity maybe for dealing with such problems oneself. Methods in major strategy may be

obsolete, but if the situation were to arise again to-morrow—a Russia on her feet again, the same policy, the same relative strength, but the weapons those of to-morrow instead of those of 1904, submarines in Port Arthur, aircraft on both sides—would not the grand strategy be governed by the same factors as those of the earlier war?

On another point in grand strategy, the planning of war on a great scale, is there nothing to learn from the experience of others about the conduct of alliances? Coalitions have failed, and coalitions have succeeded. I suggest that in the study of the coalitions of the past (remembering that the late war is 'History' just as much as the Peloponnesian confederations) we shall find reasons for successes and failures. And, if we can find reasons for anything, we have something to guide us that will assist us to repeat successes and avoid failures.

A monograph on coalitions and alliances, their failures and successes, and the reasons thereof, would be a useful and instructive thing to have on the shelf of a Planning Division. Better still, however, to have the lessons well implanted in the minds of those who have to plan, prepare for, and conduct war. I believe that one way to get those things implanted in one's mind is by the reading of history. I am very far from saying it is the only way. I would never say that no one but a student of history can be expected to know these things. Some men have intuitive gifts. Cromwell, Blake, Caesar himself—whose soldiering did not begin till he was past 50—Lord Lynedoch—who was 46—these are a few of the many examples of men who, not having made war their study, yet proved masters of it. But

we must not have the vanity to imagine ourselves of the same company. Moreover, these men had had some other high mental training, or experience that stimulated their minds and rendered them capable of thinking. We in our ordinary life, much concerned with mechanical work, with executive work that makes no great demand on the intellect, do not get this. Historical study is a substitute.

If historical study be of value for those who have to think in terms of grand strategy, it is of no less value in major strategy—the major operations of fleets, or fleets and armies. I know of few things more often repeated but less often acted upon than ' the principle of the offensive.' How often do we hear ' offence is the best defence,' but how very seldom are men bold enough to act on that principle! History furnishes examples in any quantity, most of which no one reads. One repeats the formula as unmeaningly as most people repeat the responses in church. It is a pious expression of opinion. Our affection for it is purely platonic. I suggest that if one has studied campaigns—I do not care of what dates, but plenty of them—one cannot help becoming impressed with the *reality* of the value of the offensive. Instead of becoming a mere saying it may become a real spring of action. Let anyone examine the late war and see how far offence was used as a means of defence in major strategy. It was used at Zeebrugge to defend trade. But on the whole it was not used. Defence was mainly passive—escort, patrol, minefields, evasion and so forth.

Again, how did we constitute our defence against invasion? Largely by keeping something like half a million men locked up in the country. That we attacked

the enemy whenever we had an opportunity is true. But did we deliberately employ methods aimed at forcing him to give us an opportunity, or which, by putting him on the defensive in one area, would prevent, or hinder, his attack in another? A small illustration of the action of the offensive may be found in the history of the war. When our monitors and other craft arrived up the coast of Palestine and were co-operating with the army, so soon as their appearance was reported two German submarines were ordered there to attack them. Upon what were those submarines otherwise employed? In attack upon Mediterranean trade, and that trade was suffering severely in consequence. The threat of naval operations on the coast of their allies caused their temporary withdrawal from that attack to assist in the defence of Palestine. Mediterranean trade was for the time protected from those vessels. I do not know how far the trade was affected by the temporary removal of two submarines; but it is interesting to observe that the tonnage losses in the Mediterranean for that month are lower by many thousand tons than those of several months on either side of it.

But the lesson was an old one. French trade in the old wars was constantly preserved from our attack owing to the French threats of a counter-attack on some part of our possessions—Ireland, Scotland, the West Indies, the Mediterranean. The observation of their main fleets absorbed our strength: none was left to block up the mercantile ports in the Bay; and France continued to keep her trade alive, with all the consequent reactions upon her power to continue the war, long after she would have been able but for this.

In minor strategy, history is able to impress many

lessons upon our minds. Take, for example, reconnaissance. We are all told in manuals and so forth of the importance of obtaining full and accurate information. We *may* absorb the lesson by being told; but I believe we absorb it far more thoroughly, it becomes far more of a reality, a part of our being, if we have seen how often even experienced officers have blundered in reconnoitring, have failed to make sure of their information, or have refrained from seizing an opportunity that was presented to them because, for want of thorough reconnaissance, they have not acquainted themselves fully with the facts of the situation. It is indeed a most striking phenomenon. I am not going to say that any amount of study will prevent a man from making a mistake. You are steaming in a light cruiser hard in thickish weather, you sight something; she looks to you like a battle cruiser. It is a matter of, possibly, seconds: you put your helm over and bolt. But it *is* possible that a few seconds more might enable you to establish for certain what she is; and I suggest that the officer whose whole mind is saturated with the principle of making absolutely sure will risk those few additional seconds, and make sure, and will do better than one who thinks less of that than of escaping.

It is indeed the difference between the educated and uneducated man. Let us assume that the captain on the bridge is a man thoroughly imbued with the importance of accurate information. I suggest that he will most probably, in the majority of cases, take greater risks to make sure than the mate, an unread man, whose first thought may be how to get out of a tight hole. The better a man is educated, the more he understands the big things, the better judged will be his actions—

given, of course, that he possesses the essential qualities of character and courage—and the better will he perform his functions. The old seamen themselves sometimes made mistakes in reconnaissance, so much, indeed, so that Admiral Philip Patton, one of the most experienced fighters of the Napoleonic wars, in his book called 'Some Strictures on Naval Discipline,' written late in the great war, thought it necessary strongly to impress upon officers the need of 'going sufficiently near to form a clear and accurate judgment of the size and force of any ships seen.'

A study of history impresses upon one's mind how easy it is to make a mistake and how far-reaching such a mistake may be. Hence what pains we must be at in peace to guard against a habit of mind that is in any way perfunctory in these great matters. The study is a real preparation of the mind for war. It is always difficult to foresee much; it is impossible to foresee everything. All we can do is to try and foresee as much as we can; and we can help ourselves in so doing by profiting by the experience of those who have gone through the mill.

It is idle to depend upon happy inspirations on the spur of the moment. The man who has the best chance of getting such happy inspirations is he whose mind is stored with previous experience: his own experience, preferably; otherwise, someone else's. Napoleon, indeed, said that often what one believed to be a happy inspiration proved to be merely a recollection; and I suggest that there is a great deal in that, especially for unimaginative men such as are most of us.

When we get to tactics we may well say, 'Surely here history is of little value? What is there in the tactics of a fleet of 30 ships of the line sailing 4 knots,

able to move only over 20 points of the compass, dependent on winds, armed with guns whose random shot only ran to 1400 yards, with those of a fleet of 15 *Hoods*, 150 destroyers, a score of cruisers, some aircraft carriers, and a couple of dozen fleet submarines ?'

If you are going to look for proper formations, for methods of encircling the enemy, or of effecting concentrations on parts of the enemy like Hawke's in 1747, Suffren's in the East Indian campaign, Nelson's at the Nile or Trafalgar, you are indeed going to look in vain. Those commanders employed the methods proper to their material. But if you are going to look for fundamental principles of the tactical art, you will find plenty —principles of command, of concentration, of surprise, of the offensive. You will find lessons that will impress upon you the importance of co-operation of all arms—a matter we at sea had studied insufficiently before the war—of the offensive battle, and of the importance of vigorous and sustained pursuit. How often have commanders failed to seal their victories by unrelenting pursuit! Rodney in the West Indies, content with the capture of the *Ville de Paris*; Mathews abandoning pursuit for another object; Tourville, defeating Herbert but not following up his victory, by which the whole course of the world might have been changed; Knowles's captains after the Battle of Havana; Hotham off the Hyères Islands; Bridport off the Isle de Croix. Great men, brave men, experienced men, yet believing they had done all that was necessary, believing they had beaten the enemy 'enough.' There is no such thing as 'enough' when there is more to be done. Napoleon believed the Prussians were beaten enough at Waterloo. They were not; they might have been; and possibly

the history of the world again was changed. Is it a mere work of supererogation to try to drive this lesson home? And is not history, with all its illustrations of failures to pursue, and the results of such failures, of value for forming a habit of mind and a spur to conduct? I suppose we all knew, before the war, the importance of thoroughly beating the enemy whenever we had the chance, and of pursuing him to the uttermost. But did we always do it?

Again, how have the tactical masters produced the results they desired? Has their method of command been centralised or decentralised? Have they worked their fleets like chessmen on a board, signalling to this commander 'Do this' and to the other 'Do that'? Have they designed schemes of battle in detail beforehand, or prepared formations to be adhered to, or given a general expression of their intentions and left freedom in the execution to subordinates? Which principles of command—and command is an essential part of tactics—have produced the greatest results? Or, put it the other way: what, in the greatest victories, and in the greatest failures, have been the reasons for those victories and failures? Defects in personnel, defective seamanship, lack of courage, play their parts in failure; but not very often, nor can one count upon one's enemy failing in these qualities. The French seamen in the old wars fought well, even when their fleets had been long confined to port and they had lost much of their competence as seamen: yet they consistently failed. The study of the reason for their failures is not unworthy of us. Compare, for example, Villeneuve's instructions with Nelson's memorandum. The Russian failure at Tsushima against the Japanese is, indeed, largely a

question of technical deficiency: the Japanese were better both as seamen and artillerists. But command there played its part. Study the tactical instructions of the two supreme commanders and compare the spirit that informs them. In that lies, to some extent, the reason for the condition of the personnel.

I have only touched on one or two examples in each of these branches of war. There are many others: defence of trade, attack on trade, coastal operations, river operations, attacks on fortresses, support to the army, bases, defence of lines of communication. History will stimulate our minds on all of these. I recollect hearing it said—before the war—with all the certainty of a pontifical pronouncement, that the difference between a fleet and an army was that a fleet had no lines of communication. Yet the Mediterranean Squadron on one occasion very nearly had to evacuate the Mediterranean, to leave our allies, to abandon our object in a campaign, because a French force acting from Cadiz cut its communications and nearly starved the fleet, which could not get supplies there. No one who had made any study of history would have laboured under such a delusion. To-day, the maintenance of the lines of communication is one of the burning questions of strategy in the case of war with a Western or Eastern Power.

History gives you a reason for your beliefs. No beliefs are worth twopence that are not based upon reason. Catchwords are good enough for unfortunate people who have to furnish copy for a paper. They are generally true; but there are occasions, and those often important ones, in which one has to interpret the catchwords correctly. Study helps one to do this:

and the study that is the most directly connected with our profession, the training that is most valuable to develop our minds, our imagination, to fortify our beliefs, to help us to solve the great problems of war, is that of the experience of those who have gone through it.

BATTLE CRUISERS

The view that the original invention of the 'battle cruiser' showed a foresight that was justified by results is one that seems to deserve discussion. If it is to be interpreted as meaning that the introduction of this class of ship proved an advantage to us during the war; that we achieved results which we could not have achieved without her; that we profited by possessing the type more than the enemy profited; then the opinion seems open to question.

In the first place, if we speak of 'foresight,' we must see in what that foresight consisted. What, in fact, was the governing idea of building vessels of this type?

The theory upon which the design was based was that there were three classes of vessels only—the battleship, the battle cruiser, and the ocean-going destroyer—and that each should be as powerful as it was possible to make them. No other type of cruiser, it was asserted, was of any value. The small light cruiser on the trade routes would be as ants to the armadillo when the battle cruiser came along. If the enemy sent over small vessels to attack our trade, a battle cruiser would swoop on them and destroy them in the twinkling of an eye. Operating with a fleet, the battle cruiser would force her way through any protecting screen and obtain information which the 'Llama' class could not get.

Those, speaking broadly, were the two main functions in strategy and tactics which were held to prove that the light or unarmoured cruiser was an anachronism—no more would ever be built, so it was said at the time—and that all cruising duties would be performed by the battle cruiser, assisted possibly (though it was, so far as I recollect, never definitely asserted) by the ocean-going destroyer. By being first in the field with the type we should gain a great advantage. Further, our principal prospective antagonist, Germany, would be unable to harbour such great ships.

That is the forecast; in that lies the foresight.

The last-mentioned difficulties soon proved to be non-existent. Germany deepened her harbours and canals and built the type. Let us now see what the results have been which are said to have proved the wisdom of the foresight, and, consequently, of the policy.

If this country had not built battle cruisers, Germany would not have done so. Her whole shipbuilding policy contradicts the probability of her building them. Her policy was one of small ships, but she followed our lead, since a competing navy is obliged to accept the challenge of an innovation of this character; and as we increased she did the same. She held up a whole year's construction, it will be recollected, in consequence of the appearance of the *Dreadnought* types, cancelled her intended designs, and produced a sort of *Dreadnought* as the successor of the *Deutschlands*. Thus her building of battle cruisers was the direct result of our having done so.

If, as the authorities of the day believed, she had been unable to build these ships, and we had possessed

the type and she had not, it is probable that we should have had an advantage. But as this did not happen, it is not relevant to the discussion. When she followed our lead the only advantage we had was that of numbers, obtained by priority in construction—an important advantage, to be sure. But let it be recollected that we already possessed a superiority in heavy cruisers over Germany, and that this superiority was largely nullified by the invention of the new type. It was certainly no advantage to us to have a large number of existing vessels of a powerful type suddenly rendered obsolete. The armoured cruiser was no longer of any value in the advanced line of cruisers, as she might be met and destroyed by the German battle cruiser. These armoured cruisers had now to be replaced by far more costly ships,[1] which we could not afford to build in such large numbers as those of a smaller type, and in which, therefore, we could not possess so large a numerical superiority.

In what manner, then, has the battle cruiser proved an advantage in the actual operations and actions of the war?

Heligoland Bight.—On this occasion a raid was made into the Bight to sweep up any small vessels that might be caught there. Plans were got out for a small craft operation—light cruisers and destroyers—but a battle cruiser support was added as an afterthought, an afterthought which led to some confusion, and very nearly to a regrettable incident. The light cruisers and torpedo craft came into action with German craft of a similar type; no heavy vessels were opposed to them.

[1] Battle cruiser (*Tiger*) about £2,600,000; armoured cruiser about £1,200,000.

The British battle cruisers, while they contributed to the sinking of the light cruisers, were not indispensable, and, although their assistance was timely, similar help could have been given by a greater number of light cruisers if we had had them. But the same foresight which built the battle cruiser had stopped the construction of light cruisers, which, if we had sent them in greater force, would have been better suited to chase and destroy the scattered light forces of the enemy than the limited number of heavy vessels. Unless, indeed, it should be argued—an impossible line of argument without insulting the navy—that heavy British armoured vessels were *necessary* to obtain a victory over German light forces in that skirmish, it is impossible to say that a few battle cruisers were more efficient than many light cruisers, or that the episode furnishes any solid argument for building the former.

The action of the Falkland Islands is clothed with so much of what newspapers called 'the dramatic' that it is supposed to establish a justification for the building of the battle cruiser. But does it? Had we no ships of a lesser size capable of coping with the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*? Would not the Second Cruiser Squadron,[1] then in the North Sea, have been a match for von Spee's squadron? Much, certainly, depends upon how soon they could have been sent to South America, and whether, with their lesser speed, they could have arrived in time. This can be easily determined; it

[1] *Shannon*, 4 9·2″; 10 7·5″.
Achilles, *Cochrane*, *Natal*: 6 9·2″; 4 7·5″.
Scharnhorst, *Gneisenau*: 8 8·2″; 6 5·9″.

depends upon how soon the destination of von Spee could be regarded as certain.

It was *very probable* by the end of August that the German squadron must have left Chinese waters, since Japan had come into the war in the fourth week, and Tsingtau was therefore sure to be attacked. But, apart from probabilities, the appearance of von Spee off Samoa in the middle of September, followed by his bombardment of Papeete on the 22nd, were sufficient indication that he was bound eastward, and must go to America. At the very latest, therefore, the destination was certain by the 22nd; at no great risk it might have been assumed on the 15th. Armoured cruisers dispatched at either of those dates could have reached the Horn or the Falklands before the battle cruisers, which did not sail till October 18 or arrive at the Falklands till November 7; they might, sent earlier, have reached South America in time to take Admiral Craddock's place at Coronel.

Thus a force of ships of the same class as that of the Germans was available in home waters, and could have been sent (for they could have been spared as readily as battle cruisers) earlier, and if sent earlier could have done not only what the battle cruisers did, but more, and saved two ships and much prestige. One of the critics of the Admiralty theory concerning speed said, before the war, that while one of the advantages of speed was that, while it furnished a means of correcting mistakes, the preferable course was to avoid making them. This seems applicable to the campaign in the South Pacific; and the conclusion to which this survey leads is that the Falkland Islands episode does not furnish evidence of the soundness of the policy in building battle cruisers,

for a better result, or, at the very least, one as good, could have been reached by a more judicious disposal of the other vessels we possessed.

The action off the Dogger Bank, in which the *Blücher* was sunk, is the next case to consider. The British and German squadrons, except *Blücher*, consisted of battle cruisers ; the British were in superior numbers. If neither fleet had possessed the type and a similar strategy of coast bombardment had been used by the enemy, the same situation, brought about as it was by intelligence, would have resulted. It was due neither to the speed nor the fighting powers of the British battle cruisers that they encountered the Germans on that morning. Indeed, if the speed had been less we might argue—if we wished to make an unimportant debating point—that we should have met the enemy nearer our own coast and have been in a better position to destroy him before he could reach his minefields or the support of his main fleet.

Not only were battle cruisers not essential for the defence of the coast against bombarding raids of this nature, but it is at least possible that if the enemy had not possessed these speedy and powerful units, capable of such a rapid descent upon and retirement from the coast, and to which we could only oppose a limited number of vessels, he would not have attempted them at all. These attacks, we know, were disturbing to our strategy. 'One other factor,' says Lord Jellicoe, '*exercised a cramping effect upon our strategy throughout the war*, namely, the bombardment of our undefended towns on the East Coast.'[1] If, then, the possession by the enemy of these fast powerful ships 'cramped our strategy

[1] *The Grand Fleet, 1914–16*, p. 25.

throughout the war,' our foresight in producing the type was not advantageous, but precisely the contrary.

The engagement off Jutland furnishes no more justification for the battle cruiser than any of the preceding instances, whether her part as scout for the fleet or fast battleship be considered. If battle cruisers had not existed, the scouting squadrons of both fleets would have been supported by the armoured cruisers, and the action between Sir David Beatty and von Hipper—if the squadrons had met, a thing which is hypothetical—would have taken place between squadrons of these vessels. There is no reason to suppose that the results would have been less favourable ; nor would there have been any difference in the result of the action between the main bodies, since neither the battle- nor the armoured cruisers lay in the line. The battle cruisers were no more effective for pushing through the enemy's screen against the enemy's battle cruisers (one of the reasons adduced for the design) than armoured cruisers would have been for pushing through an armoured cruiser screen, or, for the matter of that, than light cruisers *versus* light cruisers would have been. The advantage of strengthening a scouting force by heavy ships rests upon the assumption that the enemy does not support his screen with equally powerful units. If he does so, this advantage disappears.

To put it briefly then, in what manner was it advantageous to us on that day—how did we profit by the fact that there were battle cruisers on each side ? Unless this can be shown, the Battle of Jutland cannot be considered to furnish evidence of our wisdom in inventing the type, of which we lost three in the action.

In the Mediterranean the Germans possessed one

battle cruiser. I find it hard to discover in what particular this proved to our advantage. If, instead of a battle cruiser, she had had armoured cruisers in the same proportion as to numbers, would they not have been brought to action by the squadron under Admiral Troubridge, who felt himself unable to engage the *Goeben* because of her superior strength? That anxiety for the safety of the French transports, protected as they were by the whole French Fleet, would in those circumstances not have existed, and our strategy would not have been disturbed as it was. But the *Goeben*, the fast and powerful ship, dominated the situation, forced the armoured cruiser squadron to keep out of her way, and went to Constantinople, where, according to many authorities, she exercised a determining effect in forcing the Turks to declare war. No one will say that the entry of Turkey into the war was an advantage to the Entente. If that entry was owing to the presence of a battle cruiser,[1] which but for our policy in building the type would not have been there, we can hardly congratulate ourselves on our foresight in doing so.

After the entry of Turkey the *Goeben* played a disturbing part, both actively in the Black Sea and in the military operations in Gallipoli, and potentially in the waters of the Levant. How much she affected our freedom of action we do not know, but she certainly caused us to lock up an appreciable number of ships in the Aegean Sea. Transports from India and Australia

[1] 'The responsibility for the war in the East—assumed without the knowledge of the Sovereign or of the people by a German ship commanded by a German Admiral—etc.' (Statement by the Grand Vizier in representing Turkey at the Peace Conference). While this cannot be accepted as proof that without the *Goeben* Turkey would not have entered the war, it is an additional corroboration of the importance of the part she played.

passing through the Mediterranean had to be covered; their escorts had to be strong; and it would not be surprising if we should find that the need for strong escorts to the transports prejudiced our powers of sending a reinforcement of armoured cruisers to South America, and so contributed towards the defeat at Coronel. At a later date the *Goeben* sank the *Raglan*. None of this can be placed to the credit side of our foresight in producing the battle cruiser.

When we consider the operations of the battle cruiser squadron in the North Sea it may appear that this type conferred a peculiar advantage upon us. We had a force of these powerful and very swift ships: but the enemy had one too. Imagine that neither of us had possessed any battle cruisers, what is there to show that we should have been any worse off? How would the defence of the coast or the protection of trade have suffered? or should we have lost any opportunities we enjoyed of bringing the enemy to decisive action?

Certainly, if the enemy had first built the type it would have been necessary to meet him with one similar and in greater numbers; but this is very different from initiating the type and obliging him to build the ships. What we should have built instead need not be discussed; possibly improved 'Defences,' or (better) a greater number of light cruisers, the despised type of which no more were ever to have been built. For the same sum of money which gave us a numerical superiority of three battle cruisers we could have had a superiority of some twenty light cruisers—vessels of the true cruiser type, suitable for all the operations which fall to cruisers, strategical and tactical. (Construction only is spoken of here. Cost of maintenance, crews, etc., must also

be considered, which reduces the number of light cruisers below the figure above given. But it may be recollected that all these light cruisers need not necessarily be kept in permanent full commission, but can be kept efficient by rotation in commission.)

An area in which there may have been an opportunity for the battle cruiser to justify her existence was the Pacific in the early days of the war. There we had the *Australia*. When von Spee was located at Samoa, and subsequently at Papeete, the *Australia* was to the westward. On the principle of bringing the enemy to action as soon as possible, the *Australia* might have been expected to set off at once in chase and follow him wherever he went. Her speed would have served her well; and, as the *Goeben* has been adjudged to be superior to four armoured cruisers, so the *Australia* would have been superior to two. But she was not sent. No criticism is implied, as we do not know what other preoccupations enforced her retention in Australian waters. It is sufficient to say that here there was an occasion when the swift and powerful ship might have been of value. As it stands, it is neither an argument for nor against the type.

The battle cruiser is in reality the modern representative of the 'Intermediate' type of the old wars—the vessel which hovers like Mahomet's coffin between the battleship and the frigate. According to Sir Julian Corbett [1] the development of the intermediate ship was brought about by the need for stiffening the power of resistance of cruiser lines against isolated heavy ships (that is, it resulted from the *enemy's* initiative), which, 'taking advantage of the chances of the sea, could elude even the strictest blockade, and one such ship, if she

[1] *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 119.

succeeded in getting upon a line of communication, might paralyse the operations of weaker vessels.' So we held to the 50-gun ship; though it is not quite clear what the 50-gun ship—the intermediate type referred to—would do if the isolated heavy ship which broke out was a 64—as she sometimes was. She appears, he tells us, most commonly as 'the flagship of cruiser commodores, or stationed in terminal waters or at focal points where sporadic raids were likely to fall and be most destructive.' This, however, is not the use to which the battle cruiser has been put in this war. The need for such stiffening has not been experienced, except in South America in the days of von Spee, and then it was not furnished until after a disaster had occurred. No attempt was made to make sporadic raids upon oceanic convoys or trade routes by heavy ships. North Sea convoys were stiffened indiscriminately with battleships or battle cruisers, and the latter were not essential for the purpose. That the battle cruiser would have been valuable if the enemy had attempted such sporadic action against oceanic routes is true, and it may be argued that her presence prevented such raids from being made. But it did not prevent raids upon the coast, which were easier and safer to make. The Atlantic trade routes were a long way from Wilhelmshaven, fuel is limited and cannot as readily be replenished in a great ship as in a small cruiser or auxiliary armed ship, the chances of hitting upon a convoy are comparatively small, while those of being intercepted on the return journey are considerable. For some such reasons, we may infer, the enemy did not consider the attempt worth risking. Inasmuch, moreover, as any danger there might have been from enemy battle cruisers

would have resulted from our own policy in building the type, while risks from armoured cruisers or lesser vessels could be guarded against by another—the true—type of intermediate ship, the old or smaller battleship not fit to lie in the line, we can with safety state that from this point of view we should have been at no disadvantage if the type had never been invented. We see thus that the war did not furnish occasion for that use of the class for which in the wars of the past it appears primarily to have been valued.

There were cruiser lines, it is true, nearer the German bases, exposed to German attack—those of the 10th cruiser squadron. The battle cruiser was not used to stiffen them. It would not have been surprising if attempts should have been made to break up those lines by sporadic attack, and the enemy may well have been deterred from attempting to do this by the danger he would run from the forces in the northern bases. But, again, we get back to the same arguments as before. The danger from battle cruisers, if there were any, was of our own creation; if none had existed, the cruiser lines would have been covered precisely to the same degree by the same classes of vessels as those at the disposal of the enemy.

The whole question involves an important point of policy. Is it to our advantage to invent new types of a more powerful nature—to force the pace in shipbuilding? The decision depends upon the interest of the Kingdom at sea. We need to be able to carry our troops, separated as they are by oceans from all theatres in which their services may be needed, in safety across the water; to conduct our trade in security, and to stop that of our enemy. In the past it was always impossible

to lock up the enemy in his harbours; it is the same to-day, as submarines, the *Möwe* and the *Wolf*, have shown; and it will be the same in the future if the submarine should develop into a submersible gun-carrying cruiser. Direct protection in convoy, necessary in the past, has proved equally necessary to-day; and so it will be in the future. This implies, as it has always implied, dissemination. Trade, if it is to continue and develop in war, as it used to, must be as little hampered as possible. Convoys must not be kept waiting, and therefore must be frequent; that is, numerous. This involves numerous vessels to escort them. A few large ships are not so effective against raiders as many lesser ones. Large enemy ships may break out, it is true. It is the duty of the heavy ship to make such escapes and returns to harbour as precarious as possible. As, then, we need large numbers for the direct defence of communications, it is to our interest that the individual ships should be as small as the effective performance of their duties will permit; otherwise, expense rises, and we cannot afford enough of them. It is not to our interest that an enemy should build large and powerful ships which can fall upon our necessarily scattered detachments; therefore, it is against our interest to take the initiative in increasing dimensions, or to afford any encouragement to the growth of size. This should be left to other Powers; but if we do not force the pace there will be less probability of their doing so. We can watch their construction and build to answer it. But to start, as we did, the competition, is highly contrary to our interests. In the late war, the 'foresight' which forced the pace has not benefited us, nor by any theory of war can it do so in the future.

FRENCH CORSAIRS

Our general histories of past wars have confined their relations of the naval operations almost exclusively to the record of the movements of the fleets and the great battles in which those movements usually culminated. The momentous struggle which was going on throughout in defence of trade has thus tended to be obscured. Although students of those wars are acquainted with them, the masterly chapters on commerce attack in Mahan's work [1] are little read by the general public, which hardly realises how severely we were often hit by the depredations of the predecessors of the submarine. Yet the dangers our commerce, and through our commerce our existence, survived were hardly, if at all, less than those through which it passed in the late war.

The privateer warfare in the Channel in the wars from the time of Louis XIV to that of Napoleon imposed a great strain upon our sea-borne trade. The English side of the history of the *guerre-de-course*, and the means adopted by the Admiralties of the past, although treated by Mahan in broad outline, is still to be written in its detail. We have all been taught that it never achieved its object, but the measures taken to prevent it from doing so have been insufficiently

[1] *Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution and Empire*, vol. ii.

examined. We have been far too content to accept the dictum that a *guerre-de-course* must fail unless the main fleet be defeated, without examining the operations of the cruising craft, which were rendered possible by the protection from interference afforded to them by the presence of the main fleet.

The privateering industry, for such it was, was one of great dimensions. It was encouraged by the State, financed by every class of the community, and carried into effect by as hardy and daring a set of men as have ever trod a plank. Every harbour of importance on the north coast of France was a base, and the records of the local admiralties of those ports furnish a picture of the completeness of the organisation. Dunkirk, Ostend, Boulogne, Calais, Dieppe, and St. Malo were veritable thorns in the flesh of British commerce.

Rough as the times were, the French corsairs lacked entirely the calculated ferocity exhibited in the late war. Fishing vessels, though often captured, were as a general rule exempt. The 'Trêve de la Pêche' was generally observed. Thus in July 1798 four English fishing craft were driven into a French harbour, damaged by bad weather. So soon as the truth of their plea had been examined and it had been found that they had nothing but their fishing tackle on board, they were set free. On the other hand, in the year 1794, three cutters sank during a cruise about a hundred English and Dutch fishing vessels. Some captains, however, like one called Broquant, piqued themselves on rigorously observing the fishing truce. 'I have observed in your letter of the 1st of this month,' wrote the sub-commissioner of the French navy, 'the conduct observed by Captain Broquant towards the English fishing craft.

We may not hope in vain that it will result in the same treatment being given to French fishing craft by the enemy's cruisers. Pray convey my satisfaction to Captain Broquant.' Again, although savage orders were given by the Directory in 1794 to take no prisoners, and these were posted prominently on the mainmast in order that there should be no doubt that the crew knew them, and although disobedience to them was punishable by death, there were not wanting privateer captains whose humanity rose superior to such barbarity. We find Captain Bouchard with the full concurrence of all his ship's company deliberately saving the crews of sunken vessels and putting them on board fishing craft to be landed in England. An English youngster taken prisoner by Fourmentin, who was noticed by his captor to be in tears, was taken by him to his own house, not as a prisoner but as one of the family, looked after by his wife, and given instruction with his children until released. Thus, while the war was fiercely waged and each nation did its utmost to destroy the commerce of the other, humanity was not lost sight of. We cannot imagine a French privateersman behaving like some of the enemy's submarine commanders; and we are able to understand how it was possible for an episode like the following to occur. In July 1793 the seamen of the French ships *Modeste* and *Badine* were drinking and singing in a cabaret at Genoa. Five seamen of an English frigate which was at anchor in the port, who were passing by, heard the 'Marseillaise' being sung. When the line 'Amour sacré de la Patrie' was reached, they spontaneously took off their hats. The Frenchmen at once appreciated the courtesy, offered them wine, which was accepted, and on parting the enemy seamen shook hands

with each other, the English saying: 'Vous bons Français, nous bons Anglais.' Incidents such as these, while they softened war, caused no abatement in the endeavour to weaken the enemy; but how contrary are they to the doctrine of 'frightfulness' which since the war appears to have been accepted by those very peoples who condemned it.

The captures made by the privateers even of one port alone, Boulogne, give some idea of the damage done to British commerce. Thus, three months' cruising of the corsairs of that port resulted in the capture of 66 prizes with 557 prisoners; the cargoes consisted of sugar, coffee, wood, coal, brandy, canvas, iron, salt provisions, and hemp, and brought prize-money to the value of over six million francs; and this without the loss of a vessel. Between 1797 and 1802, 154 privateers of the port brought in 201 prizes and 1967 prisoners, though at a loss to themselves of 16 ships and 775 men. In a four months' cruise the *Aigle* of Boulogne took 14 prizes worth 1,135,254 francs. One prize taken by the *Alexandrine* on December 2, 1809, brought her captors nearly 600,000 francs, and another, in the following February, 1,674,900 francs. Between September 1807 and April 1808 the *Grand Napoleon* took 14 prizes, valued at 1,304,901 francs. It will readily be appreciated from such figures as these—which are a few out of a very great number—how readily subscribers were to be found for fitting out privateers, how greatly Boulogne's development was brought about by this prosperous industry, and what a serious matter this privateer war represented to British commerce. But serious as it was, great as were the losses, they were not great enough to be decisive, and the measures taken by the British

Admiralty, though not effective to the point of destroying the privateers, did keep the ravages within bounds. Cruising vessels of every class, frigates, brigs and cutters, were maintained in great numbers, and the organisation of convoy reached a high point of efficiency. 'The result of the convoy system,' says Mahan, 'warrants the inference that when properly systematised and applied it will have more success as a defensive measure than hunting for individual marauders, a process which, even when most thoroughly planned, still resembles looking for a needle in a haystack.' Mahan in another place indicates the offensive measure proper for privateer war: 'When one navy is overwhelmingly predominant as the British was in 1794, and the enemy confines himself to commerce destroying by crowds of small privateers, then the true military policy is to stamp out the nests where they swarm.' This was done in the old French wars in the East and West Indies; but the stamping out of the numerous ports on the coast of France itself was unfortunately beyond our powers, and our protection was necessarily confined to the defensive measures of cruising and convoy.

The privateer occasionally caught a Tartar. In the end of 1796 the *Rusé*, commanded by Captain Fourmentin —one of a most celebrated family of corsairs of that name—was cruising at dawn about five or six leagues off Portsmouth. The look-out man sighted a ship which appeared at first sight to be a frigate. The captain, however, wished to make sure before making any attempt upon her. The hull and spars certainly gave the impression of a man-of-war, but her manner of sailing was that of a merchant ship. 'That is not the way a man-of-war is handled,' said Fourmentin to

himself; and he concluded she was an undermanned East Indiaman. He therefore continued to close her, thinking he had a rich prize. But he was mistaken. It was a 50-gun frigate, which having herself sighted the *Rusé* had purposely been worked in a hesitating un-man-of-war-like fashion. Not until Fourmentin was within gunshot did he discover his mistake. The Frenchman at once made all possible sail to escape, lightening his ship by throwing overboard guns, chests, and even provisions. The frigate, which had continued her trick up to the last moment, at once hoisted the British ensign and opened fire. A three hours' chase followed, in which the good sailing qualities of the *Rusé* and the seamanship of Fourmentin enabled her to avoid destruction, and her safety was eventually assured by the frigate's maintopmast going over the side in a violent squall.

This was not Fourmentin's only experience of a trap. In command of the *Grand Furet* in 1799, when cruising off Boulogne in company with another corsair, he sighted an English ship a little way to seaward. The handling of the ship, her appearance, the cut of her sails, and the way in which they were set all combined to confirm the belief that she was a large merchant ship, especially as, in addition, although it was broad daylight no battery could be distinguished. Fourmentin therefore closed her, intending to board. The moment he ran alongside, however, up went previously unseen gun ports, and a broadside was poured into the *Grand Furet* by the stranger. She was a disguised 24-gun frigate.

It was now neck or nothing. The *Furet*, like many others of her kind, was equipped with a large ship's

company to allow for boarding and prize crews, and her only chance lay in attack. She therefore boldly persisted in her attempt to board; but she was met with a withering volley of musketry. Fourmentin, wounded in the wrist early in the engagement, continued to encourage his crew until he was wounded a second time in the chest. He was carried below, and his second-in-command continued the fight until the arrival of her consort made matters so hot for the frigate that although the *Furet* was partly dismasted the two corsairs escaped and regained their port of Boulogne. But it was Fourmentin's last cruise. He died of his wound shortly after being carried home.

Fourmentin's brother, Bucaille Fourmentin, commanding *L'Impromptu*, was nearly caught by a similar trick in 1803. Driven from the Channel by the British cruising vessels which were working in three large groups disposed obliquely across the Channel, he decided that the dangers of those waters were too great and the prospects too small. He resolved therefore to transfer his attentions to the North Sea. Having captured a schooner off Yarmouth laden with wood from Norway, and having stopped twenty neutrals who, their papers being in order, were allowed to proceed, he sighted one evening a promising-looking prize. He at once steered for her, examining her carefully as he closed, for he feared some trick, the hull and general appearance of her canvas being suspicious. His solitary capture had made his crew impatient, and he held on until close to the vessel. When at length he drew up and saw her whole side he recognised her as a powerful brig-of-war, whose captain, by imitating the manners of a merchant ship, had intended to tempt the privateer to attack him. A hot

chase followed in which the *Impromptu* outsailed the brig and escaped.[1]

It was this high quality of sailing which made the destruction of the privateers so difficult, and, so far as escape is concerned, put them on a level with the submarine of to-day. Built and rigged specially for the purpose, and admirably commanded by prime seamen, it was next to impossible for the majority of the small cruising ships to overhaul the privateer if she had but a start out of gun range. If a ship was sighted which could be distinguished as a man-of-war, the corsair's escape was nearly certain. Hence, except for the fastest frigates, the only chance open to most vessels of destroying the privateer at sea lay in drawing her within reach of their guns, hoping then by a sudden broadside to dismantle and disable her. The well-armed small ship, however, although she could not be sure of overhauling the privateer, was largely used. She made the areas unhealthy for the privateer and was an important factor in overcoming the scandalous immunity enjoyed by the corsairs in earlier wars, during one of which in the seventeenth century a single privateer lay for three weeks at anchor off Rye, holding up the whole of the trade of those parts. The whole West Indian convoy was on one occasion held up from April to September.

The outbreak of war nearly invariably found us with an insufficiency of small vessels of every sort to deal with these pests. 'Economical' governments in the early eighteenth century allowed ships to fall into disrepair and failed to keep up the necessary strength in frigates and small craft, so that when war broke out the Channel trade was at the mercy of the enemy who

[1] These anecdotes are quoted by M. H. Malo, *Les Corsaires*.

attacked it from the Spanish and French ports. So serious were the losses on one occasion that a petition was presented by the merchants of the Kingdom to Parliament for a better defence of trade. Those ships we had were few and slow, and the privateers from Bilbao, Santander and San Sebastian laughed at them. 'It is like setting a cow to catch a hare,' growled Admiral Sir John Norris, in protesting at the disgraceful state and design of our cruising craft. The merchants' protests had their effect in procuring an increase of convoys and cruisers. The later years of every war show a steady and continual rise in the number of small vessels allocated to the defence of Channel trade. In the great war the number found necessary was prodigious. In 1803 over 1500 small craft were employed in the Channel alone on this duty, over and above the frigates, brigs, sloops and gunboats of the Royal Navy. Numbers were essential, and had to be, and were, provided. The fleet cruising off Ushant under Cornwallis was protecting trade, but indirectly only. It was the host of small craft which were providing the direct defence and without which we must have succumbed.

Outside the Channel area a patrol line stretched from Cape St. Vincent through the area off Cape Finisterre to Cape Clear. The patrols on this line, though primarily intended for intelligence, were also regarded as the only means of protecting that trade route.[1] The defence of the route along the Portuguese coast by small patrolling craft had been in force at least as early as 1740, when sloops and small frigates were allocated for its defence, working from the Tagus.

What however is encouraging in these old records

[1] Corbett, *Maritime Strategy*, pp. 276–7.

is that notwithstanding the advantages enjoyed by the enemy, he was unable entirely to cripple our commerce or force us to relax our hold upon him. With ports at his disposal the whole length of the Channel; with a race of seamen brought up for nearly 200 years in the tradition of commerce attack; with money to fit out vessels, and the inducements of great rewards; with vessels so well manned and armed that even the best-armed merchant ships had difficulty in beating off their attacks, and of such excellent sailing qualities that they could evade capture by our cruising craft—with all these advantages trade survived. The great volume of British commerce was one of the most important factors: and although British ships were being captured by the enemy, enemy ships were being taken from him, which went some way towards replacing the losses, though these still greatly exceeded those of the French. The other factors were the two great measures of convoys and cruisers. 'Fast frigates and sloops of war, with a host of smaller vessels, were disseminated over the ocean upon the tracks which commerce follows and to which hostile cruisers were therefore constrained. To each was assigned his cruising ground, the distribution being regulated by the comparative danger, and by the necessary accumulation of merchant shipping in particular localities, as the North Sea, the approach to the English Channel, and, generally, the centres to which the routes of commerce converge.'[1]

The severity of the losses in the Revolutionary war brought about the Convoy Act in 1798, which enforced sailing under convoy, the effect of which was greatly to

[1] Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution and Empire*, ii. 204.

diminish the number of prizes taken by the enemy. The compulsory arming of merchant ships goes back as far as 1625, when a proclamation was issued that ships of and over 60 tons were forbidden to go to sea unless fully armed.'[1] Between these various measures and the application of concentration of effort in the method of distribution of cruising vessels, the commerce destroyers, notwithstanding all the favourable conditions attending their *guerre-de-course*, failed in their effort. British trade and British credit was enabled to withstand the storm; but the efforts which had to be put out to enable them to do so were prodigious.

[1] *Law and Custom of the Sea*, R. G. Marsden (Navy Records Society, vol. xlix.).

SEA-POWER AND THE EMPIRE

Two Lectures, Cambridge, July 22, 1927

I

That the Empire has been built up on sea-power is such a commonplace that perhaps we incline to take the fact for granted without troubling to acquaint ourselves with reasons for the belief. We accept the theory like that of gravitation; yet should we not have some solid foundation for the belief? and where is that solid foundation to be discovered except in the record of facts? The names of some few sea-commanders and the battles they fought are familiar to many people. But how few those names are which are familiar, and how few of those who know them can say in what manner the men and their deeds are connected with the Empire. If one thinks of two great oversea territories —Canada and India—what names occur instinctively to one's mind? Are not 'Wolfe' and 'Clive' almost the first? Braddock may be remembered in one theatre because 'The Virginians' has been read, and Wellesley in the other. But few could say who were the seamen who made it possible for Wolfe to go up the St. Lawrence, or Clive up the Hoogli, or indeed explain the relation of sea-power to those particular operations, beyond the general idea that the navy in some way kept the seas

open. Yet it is of interest to the people of this country to understand in what manner, and upon what general system, the sea forces of the country were playing a part in those great expansions of Empire.

Two curiously opposite theories of Empire are probably familiar to most people. On the one hand there is that, peculiar to ourselves and representative of that self-depreciation that is so characteristic of ourselves, that the Empire happened by accident, without conscious direction of any kind. On the other there is the theory, to be found outside this country, that it is the result of a consistent Machiavellian policy of embroiling the other nations of the world, and, when they were engaged in war, filching the possessions of our enemies while refraining from giving the help we owed to our allies. A third theory may be called that of destiny, which in some unexplained manner has operated to produce colonial expansion much as Britannia at Heaven's command was directed in the well-known song to rule the ocean. 'A strange destiny has throughout the age projected our population and extended our influence to many areas far flung the whole world over.' [1] I suggest that history does not confirm this doctrine of 'destiny,' any more than it confirms those of accident or subtle design; and that Empire has arisen from different causes. Aristotle long ago defined the first business of the politician or governor to be to ensure to the governed two things—supply and security. The parts played by sea-power and Empire are the practical expression of the performance of the governing function of the rulers of England in the past.

We have a great Empire and a great sea-power.

[1] A speech at Barton Abbey, Saturday, July 16, 1927 (*The Times*, July 18).

Under what influences have they come into being, and what are the relations between them? Was it that, being strong at sea, we of definite and set purpose used that strength to extend our territories? Or were the possessions themselves extended for the purpose of increasing our sea-power? Or did the two, sea-power and Empire, grow together, each a constituent and contributory to the growth of the other? Is the Empire the offspring of an ambitious 'Imperialism,' or, in so far as Empire is related to sea-power, has it come into being partly, at least, as the result of the far more prosaic policy of defence—of a desire for security?

The beginning of the Empire is, I think, the year 1583, when Humphrey Gilbert founded the first English colony, Newfoundland. The world was then in a state of eager desire for knowledge—knowledge of matters religious, physical, geographical. The spirit of exploration into all these spheres of knowledge was abroad, and that spirit played its part. The great trading companies of the time—the Muscovy Company, the Levant and the Fishmongers Companies—thought their monies well spent in the advancement of the country's service; and the country's service and their own advantage were to be found in exploration. Commerce was one of the great stimulants which drove forth the 'souls of fire' to do battle with Titans and monsters. But geographical exploration was one form only of advancing commerce; there was another by which more immediate results were to be obtained—trade with the newly discovered world. That trade was forbidden. The Bull of Pope Alexander VI had given those worlds to Spain and Portugal, and to them a monopoly of the trade. It was to force the door of that *Oceanum Clausum* that John

Hawkins, the first of the seamen of the modern British Navy, pushed his vessels into the ports of the Spanish Main. Denied the right to possess any of the new territory, or to trade with it, the Elizabethans proceeded to take possession and to trade by force, in defiance of the Papal Bull. The idea sprang up that the old country was overpopulated and must find empty space for its surplus people. Raleigh and Hakluyt held these views, and Michael Drayton expresses a policy of Imperial expansion in his fiery lines :

> A thousand Kingdoms will we seek from far,
> As many nations waste with civil war ;
> Where the dishevelled ghastly sea nymph sings,
> Our well-rigged ships shall stretch their swelling wings,
> About the world in every clime to roam ;
> And those unchristened countries call our own,
> Where scarce the name of England hath been known.

That is one spirit. The idea it breathes is one of using our well-rigged ships—our sea-power—to spread our Empire and acquire those new lands which our teeming population needed. In that spirit, at least in part, our earliest American colonies came into being. That they could come into being was due to the strength at sea ; and knowledge of what that strength was had been shown, or had been confirmed, by the evidence of the defeat of the Armada. Voyages there had indeed been to the West before then ; Newfoundland, as we have seen, was already ours : but the great expansions follow the establishment of the security without which expansion is not possible.

The Armada gave the English the required sense of security ; but it gave it not only to them but also to their neighbours the Dutch, whose freedom was ensured

by that victory. English and Dutch proceeded to open up trade both in the West and in the East. Each formed trading companies; the shipping of each increased amain to deal with the great business, and it was not long before jealousies and bitterness came into play. The English, well aware that their security from invasion depended upon sea-power, saw their neighbours whom they had, as they felt, saved from extinction at the hands of Spain, creating a navy which might at any time be at the service of a military ally—France or Spain. This gave a sense of insecurity. Further, they saw these neighbours developing a vast trade, and in so doing excluding, by every possible means, English trade from the same area; and the more the Dutch expanded, the more numerous became their ships and seamen, and therefore the greater their sea-power and the greater English insecurity. Hence two nations, whose interests, religious, political and military, were closely bound together, became bitterly hostile in consequence of oversea settlements and sea-power.

The principal struggle began in the East Indies, where each nation had those settlements from which their Empires sprang later. It was a struggle largely between the private companies, but with this difference: that whereas the British company depended upon its own efforts and received no assistance from the Crown, the Dutch had powerful support; and, although English trade and English settlements grew up in India, beginning at Surat and Madras, the Dutch, strong in their sea-power, dominated those islands to the eastward called the Spice Islands whose trade was the most coveted of all.

The Armada was defeated in 1588. The English

East India Company was formed in 1601. Spain could then offer but little if any opposition to the voyaging of ships to the East; it was otherwise in the East itself. There the Portuguese had already been established for a century. They had fighting ships, a great dockyard at Goa, and stations capable of supporting both fighting ships and trade—all the means by which resistance to interlopers could be made, and their own century-old monopoly retained. To overcome this resistance, force was needed; and the form which the first fighting forces of the East India Company took was naval: for it was necessary first to reach the territories with which trade was desired. East India ships were therefore armed, and before long had to assert their strength. A great Portuguese fleet was defeated in a fierce battle by a Company fleet under Captain Downman in 1615, and this evidence of English sea-power so impressed the Emperor Jehangir that he gave a firman permitting the Company to trade, and condescended to receive the Company's Ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, at the Moghul Court. Thus the foundations of our Empire in India were commerce, which took us thither, and sea-power which permitted commerce to be conducted in security. Not only was there not a dream of territorial sovereignty or Empire, but it was definitely the policy to avoid it. 'Let this be a rule,' wrote Roe to the Company, 'that if you will profit, seek it at sea and in quiet trade.' What eventually led to Empire was not ambition for conquests and Imperial diadems, but the need for security to that 'quiet trade' which could only be furnished by establishing peace on land.

While the East India Company was thus unconsciously laying the foundations of Empire in the East,

colonies were springing up in America, in the West Indies and in Africa; and this growth was coincident with a decline in sea-power. James I cared little, and did not understand much, of what sea-power meant, beyond the keeping of order in the Narrow Seas; he was content to live upon the interest of the capital bequeathed him by the Elizabethans; and British strength at sea was sufficient to permit expansion to continue. But as expansion continued, the earlier views on the function of colonies underwent a change. The fear that the country must send its people abroad to relieve congestion at home was replaced by a fear that the country was being drained of its people and would not be able to develop its industry. Under the influence of this view, the relations between sea-power and Empire took a new orientation. Our policy should be to extend our trade and to possess a fleet adequate for its defence and our security; the increase in the trade would increase our shipping and seamen. The colonies were not an end in themselves, an overflow for surplus populations, or an increased strength, but a means whereby trade would increase. Colonies in America and settlements in India were markets: trade and security were the great objects to which they contributed: they were elements in sea-power. 'The undoubted interest of England,' said a writer in 1672, 'is Trade, since it is that only which can make us either rich or safe; for without a powerful Navy we should be a prey to our neighbours, and without Trade we should have neither seamen nor ships.' In the same way the Commissioners of Customs in 1678 said that 'the Plantation Trade is one of the greatest nurseries of the shipping and seamen of this kingdom.' While Newfoundland was held in

particular value, not as a colony, but for its fisheries which bred and employed the seamen who manned the mercantile and royal fleets. Fishing in small boats, or settling in Newfoundland without going to sea, both of which failed to increase, or even tended to reduce, the number of ocean ships, were prohibited, for fear that Newfoundland should cease to be a source of sea-power.[1] In Holland a corresponding view as to the relation of colonies and sea-power was held. John de Witt, the Grand Pensionary, described colonies, commerce and industry as the three factors which made up Dutch power.

Another connexion, on a small but for all that significant scale, between Empire and sea-power is to be found in the development of the colonies as sources of supply of essential naval stores—principally timber, hemp, pitch and tar. The forests of England did not supply timber enough, nor of the kind needed, and England was dependent for her great masts upon the Baltic. To be at the mercy of a neutral, or a possible enemy, for such essentials, was a danger: and in 1670 Commissioners were appointed to examine the possibilities of a self-supporting Empire in this respect. 'If masts, tar and pitch could be produced,' it would, in the words of a writer of 1695, 'make New England, of the most useless and unprofitable plantation of the Nation the best and most advantageous.'[2] So successful was this in the end that the bulk of certain classes of these supplies came from America.[3] But the picture had its reverse side. When the New England colonists cut off

[1] G. L. Beer, *The Old Colonial System*, ii. 201–204.

[2] Brewster, *Essays on Trade and Navigation*, quoted by Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, p. 239.

[3] Beer, *op. cit.* ii. 245.

this supply in 1775,[1] not the least of the difficulty of fitting out and maintaining the fleet to fight the coalition of sea Powers, our enemies, arose from the exhaustion of stocks of masts, and inability to obtain from the Baltic spars of the size we needed. The loss of the colonial supplies thus definitely weakened our sea-power in an unsuspected manner.

Thus sea-power and Empire in this period of the seventeenth century are closely associated. Empire is not being sought for the sake of territory, or what to-day goes by the vague name of 'Imperialism,' and did not result from an offensive Imperial spirit making use of an overwhelming sea-power. It was a means by which sea-power could be created for the purposes of safety of the country and its trade. I am very far from saying that Colonial Empire was solely related to this encouragement of sea-power, but that it was one of the factors, and played no unimportant part.

Although British sea-power revived under Cromwell, as it was necessary it should for the security of the Commonwealth, colonies made no great expansion; for the exodus caused by Laud was largely counteracted by the toleration of the Long Parliament. Jamaica was added as a result of the failure of an expedition to Hispaniola, but the Commonwealth was too busy at home to expand abroad. With the Restoration, colonial and Indian affairs came again to the front. Two further wars followed with the Dutch. Both of these had their origins in trade and colonies. The episodes most familiar to people are the burning of Chatham by the Dutch fleet, the fight at Solebay, St. James's fight and

[1] The last cargo of masts reached England on July 31, 1775, shortly after the news of Bunker Hill: Albion, *op. cit.*

the four days' battle. But while these fierce struggles were being fought in home waters, events were taking place in the Far East which were largely to determine the nature of the future Empire in India. The English Company in the East was unable to hold its own against the Government-aided Dutch Company; and while the fleets fought at home, the Dutch superiority in the East made itself felt. It was due to the fact that the English were not strong enough to remain in the Spice Islands that their efforts were thenceforward directed towards their settlements in India; and hence that the British Empire in the East is on the mainland and not in the islands. To weakness at sea, one might—not without paradox, it is true—say, we owe it that the Indian Empire takes the form it takes to-day.

While Englishmen and Hollanders were thus fighting, to the detriment of both, their battle for the Eastern trade, a new sea Power and a new aspirant for Colonial Empire was coming forward—France. Under the influence of Colbert, a French East India Company came into existence in 1664, some sixty years after the British, at the moment when the British and Dutch were about to fly at each other's throats. In America a great French colony had long been established to the north of the British colonies. Though—if we except the short conquest of Canada by England in 1632 and its restoration—no struggle took place with the new aspirant to Colonial Empire for many years, it was to come, and when it came was to be decided both in Canada and India by sea-power.

Sea-power, though mainly a matter of ships and seamen, is also one of ports in which those ships can repair, store themselves, and refresh their men

in security; which we call bases. The acquisition of colonies in America and the West Indian Islands gave England those essential ports. The expedition sent by Cromwell to take Hispaniola, as a part of his war against Spain, failed wretchedly, and its commanders turned back to Jamaica and captured it; and thus we came into possession of an excellent harbour, later to be the headquarters of British sea-power in the leeward part of the Caribbean Sea. To windward the British already possessed, since 1632, the island of Antigua with its excellent harbour: thus we then held, in each extremity of that wide range of valuable colonies, secure ports in which squadrons could be supplied and repaired, which were available to furnish safe anchorage to the prosperous commerce of the Caribbean Islands. With the Restoration another step had also been made in India. Bombay came into British hands, as a part of the marriage settlement of the Portuguese princess, later to be developed as the principal means of building and repairing the fleet of the East India Company and the ships of the Royal Navy in Eastern waters. It was a very small, but a very important, settlement; for nowhere else on the extensive coast of India until the Hoogli is reached was there another enclosed harbour. Madras, an earlier settlement than Bombay, was an open roadstead where neither docks could be built nor could ships lie in the stormy season between October and January; and Ceylon, with its fine harbour at Trincomali, had been taken from the Portuguese by the Dutch in 1658. Without Bombay the story of the Indian Empire would have been very different. It was the support of the shipping which was at once the reason for our being in India and the means by which we remained there.

Thus, by the time of the coming of William III, notwithstanding corruption, maladministration in the Admiralty, and arbitrary annulment of charters in the colonies, sea-power and trade had extended, and Empire was resulting. Relations with the Dutch had been largely influenced by Eastern trade, and naval wars had been fought in consequence. In the West Indies, the great island of Hayti, for some years a buccaneer establishment, had become a French colony in 1677; and there a naval base had in consequence sprung up. The great mercantilist age was beginning. The value of trade as a means of national wealth—and consequently of national power—was taking an increasing hold on men's minds. Each country must have colonies with which to trade, and the colonial trade of an enemy in war was recognised as one of the means by which the country was able to maintain its armies in the field. With Spain this had long been recognised. Those epic voyages of Drake and others, those attacks by Blake upon the Spanish treasure fleets, and all that glamour that surrounds the Spanish Main, romantic adventures though they were, were something more practical. They aimed at cutting off from Spain that wealth by means of which alone she supported her armies. So, when the great wars of William III and Queen Anne were waged, we find writers urging the same course against France, and condemning that warfare which led us to creating armies at prodigious cost to penetrate into Germany when it was within our power to cripple France by cutting off her wealth by the capture of her colonies; with the reciprocal benefit of acquiring those colonies for ourselves, giving us new markets, increasing our trade, increasing our shipping, and so increasing also our

sea-power. Sea-power and Empire thus would walk hand in hand, each subserving the development of the other. Campaigns on the Continent, result though they might in the addition of glorious names to our national story —Blenheim, Ramillies, Malplaquet, Oudenarde—were Dead Sea fruit. It was not thus that a maritime country should fight. Its strength lay at sea and in its trade, and by their means, and against the similar props of an enemy's strength and power of resistance, should it fight. So argued this school of thought. A trivial and ill-conducted expedition was sent, it is true, in 1711 to conquer Canada, which failed, as from its want of preparation it deserved to fail. But those who thus desired trade and colonies, who desired to use our sea-power in that way to breed sea-power in all its manifestations, were in a minority and did not get their way.

So it came about that those eighteen years of war from 1689 to 1695, and from 1702 to 1714, saw no increase in Empire comparable with that of later times; but witnessed, on the contrary, British colonies being attacked and ravaged, British trade held up, and British merchant fleets lost; and at the end, an exhausted Britain. But her enemy, France, was still more exhausted, for she had not the stamina furnished by a great colonial trade. The thirty years of peace that followed—I omit the minor wars or those on the Continent in which Britain was not involved—were years of colonial activity. Peace revived prosperity, and British and French trade increased both in the East and the West Indies: and with the increase came jealousy. The idea, taught by Colbert, that the prosperity of a neighbour was a danger, and that a truly great France would be one in which all her rivals were paupers, held the field.

Hence, when that quarrel between England and Spain which we know by the name of the War of Jenkins' Ear broke out, and England, to cripple Spain, sent an expedition against her great trading settlement at Cartagena in New Spain, France, fearing that success would endanger her own commerce in the West Indies and diminish her own trade, prepared to intervene. Collisions between British and French ships both in home waters and the Western Seas took place: as they are liable to do when the air is electrical with suspicion and fear. In this spirit and situation the nations came to the edge of war. At the same time a new colour had been imparted to the relations of English and French in India. The French, late comers with a few settlements, had not hitherto proved serious rivals to the British Company; and so peaceful had everything in the Indian Ocean been that no Royal squadron had been considered necessary there except for a brief period when pirates had given more trouble than could be dealt with by the armed ships of the Company—the precursors of the Indian navy of to-day. Sir Thomas Roe's advice to the Company never to engage themselves except by sea had so far been followed. Interference with native princes, and intervention in their local quarrels, had been studiously avoided. Britain had remained a sea Power, with trading stations that were limited to small areas close to the water. But now a new policy came into play. An able and ambitious man, Dupleix, came to India as head of the French Company, who saw what possibilities existed for successful intervention in the affairs of the princes of India, what concessions were to be gained here, or advantages over the British there, by giving the help of French arms and discipline. A few

well-armed and disciplined European troops of that time were a match for many times their numbers of those of India, undisciplined, unorganised, ill-armed so far as firearms were concerned. So France and Britain came into opposition in India, and when war actually broke out in 1744 on a European question, the collisions of the small squadrons on the Indian coast and the blockade of the French trade were of far greater moment than the battles of Fontenoy and Dettingen, more familiar to your ears though the latter may be. The siege of Madras, the destruction of French trade on the Coromandel and Orissa coasts, marked the first round in the contest which was to decide whether the flag of France or Britain was to wave over the sub-continent of India; and it was a round which, notwithstanding the loss of Madras, ended in favour of the Power which commanded at sea.

At the same time sea-power was redressing in America the misfortunes of our allies in Europe. Fontenoy and Dettingen have been mentioned among the events there; to them must be added the victorious campaign of Marshal Saxe in Flanders. Because Flanders included the great port of Antwerp, and Antwerp, both as a great trading port and a port where shipping could be assembled for the transport of an army, was a threat to British trade and British security, so for Britain it was an element of faith that France should not possess Flanders, or the so-called Low Countries. This possession Louis XV greatly desired, and his armies under Saxe conquered it. But this conquest was rendered null by sea-power operating 3000 miles away across the Atlantic. There, at the entrance of the great river St. Lawrence, which leads to Quebec and Montreal, the principal cities and ports of Canada,

lay an island, Cape Breton, with a fortified naval base, Louisbourg, the sentry-box of the St. Lawrence. Against that base went a small expedition of 4000 colonists from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and other colonies, under the command of a shipbuilder of New Hampshire, escorted by a British squadron. Louisbourg fell. Imagine if you can what it would mean to London if an inveterate enemy held the port of Sheerness in the Medway, and had it in his power to stop the trade coming up the river by which you live. Such was the effect of the loss of Louisbourg to the French. The approaches to Canada were in the hands of such an enemy, and if Canada was to remain free from such crippling action, or even to be retained, the English must be got out of Louisbourg. The price was the return of Flanders to Austria. Four thousand troops, operating by virtue of the strength of sea-power, created by shipping and colonies, nullified wholly the victories of a hundred and forty thousand. But the return had its ill-effect on the Empire. The Northern Colonies resented the lack of consideration of their own claims. Britain, they said, thought only of herself and sacrificed to her own ends the interests of the colonies, to whom the possession of Cape Breton was not only a security for their trade but a step towards the ejection of the rival nation from America. They could not, or did not, see that security at the heart is the fundamental need for security of the outer members.

Thus that war, ending in 1748, left the bounds of Empire unaltered. Not an island nor a province changed hands on either side. Sea-power had not only guarded the Empire and protected its trade: it had enabled England's continental allies, constantly worsted

in their fighting on land—as her allies so frequently are —to come out of the war without vital losses.

A new war followed eight years later in which sea-power was to show its true relation to Empire. The story of the conquest of Canada, or at least of the great drama on the plains of Abraham, is familiar to everyone. But it needs to be recollected that the passage of the armies of Wolfe and Amherst to Canada, their maintenance when there, and the isolation of the French armies, whereby while they dwindled in the field they could not be reinforced, was the result of sea-power; as it was sea-power, in the shape of Hawke's squadron, battling with the winter gales off Brest in 1759, which, covering those distant operations, also preserved the heart from that counter-stroke of invasion to which, naturally, the military power of France turned its attention. So too it was sea-power in India which enabled Clive to recapture Calcutta from Siraj-ud-Daulah and to appear on the field of Plassey. Never was a bolder move made than that of Admiral Watson and the Council of Madras, when, threatened with the prospective arrival of a French squadron on the Coromandel coast, he carried Clive and his army to Calcutta to avenge the crime of the Black Hole. And finally, when Spain, having hesitated for five years, threw her lot in with France, it was sea-power which dealt her the blow that crushed her, when an army, of which a contingent came from the Northern Colonies, captured her great city of Havana, upon the possession of which her whole Western commerce, and consequently her power to exist, depended.

Thus, an immense territory of North America came under the British flag, French rivalry in India was ended, and security for the Empire and its interests was gained,

and could not have been gained except for sea-power. And though the results were this great aggregation of possessions, we do well to remember that fundamentally it was not for that purpose, but for security, that the war was fought: for the colonies were being rendered insecure by that movement initiated by M. de Galissonnière, to join Canada to the Mississippi basin and confine the Northern colonists irrevocably to a strip of coast.

The fighting in India brought more territory under the Company, and it would have been possible, as Clive pointed out, to conquer the whole country. But there also conquest was not the aim, which was security for trade. We had gone some way from Sir Thomas Roe, to seek profit only at sea and in quiet trade, but his view still obtained. Circumstances, not set intention, drove us further inland. Clive counselled against extensions, and in insisting on keeping within the Company's territory said, 'The reputation we have established by the force of our arms makes it necessary for the Company's advantages, as well as for the benefit of the trade in general, that we establish the like reputation for equity and moderation.' [1]

Thus, though the extensions of Empire were the eventual result of sea-power, sea-power had not been used aggressively; it was as the protector of trade and the settlements on which trade depended that it came into play; and it was used not merely as a medicine of present ills but as a prophylactic against those of the future by the removal of the possible causes of quarrels; for that was truly what the presence of the French both in India and in Canada constituted.

[1] Dodwell, *Dupleix and Clive*, p. 146.

II

France fully realised that the loss of her great colony in Canada, the destruction of her position in India, and the disaster to her fleet, which lost 70 ships of war, of which 20 were of the line of battle, were due to weakness of her sea-power; and she set herself to restore her fleet with the same unconquered courage and the same facing of unpleasant facts that she showed after her military disasters of 1870. She rebuilt her men-of-war, she improved the training of her officers and men; and, though she realised that it would not be practicable, even with a reorganised navy, to regain her lost colony of Canada, she began, under the able administration of the Duc de Choiseul, to prepare for a return to India when the opportunity should arise. 'You cannot flatter yourselves to remain absolute masters of Hindostan,' De Bussy said to Clive in 1767. 'Believe me, we have not given up India. Our claims lie dormant at present, and we shall lay them when we can assert them with the sword.' [1] To assert them with the sword required as its preliminary sea-power, without which the sword could not reach India. In Choiseul's preparations are to be found the beginnings of the course of events by which the Union of South Africa is to-day a British Dominion.

Choiseul realised that successful operations in India against the British were possible only with superiority at sea; and that that superiority should be established before the outbreak of war. French squadrons should forestall British in the Indian Ocean, and not run the

[1] Sir G. Forrest, *Clive*, ii. 364.

risk of being intercepted in home waters, as so many had been in both the earlier wars. When peace came in 1762, the British had sent home all but a few small ships; and Choiseul decided to assemble a considerable naval force, together with a large body of troops, at Mauritius, then recently taken over from the French Company as a Royal Colony. Immediately another war should break out, this squadron and army would descend upon the British settlements in India, and conquer them long before any naval or military aid could reach the British from England.

Notwithstanding that French ships and troops were sent out with the utmost secrecy, the assemblage of shipping and troops at Mauritius became known to the British. They knew also that Mauritius, still largely undeveloped, could not maintain these many extra European mouths. Food, in particular grain and cattle, had to be imported; and it was from the Dutch colony of the Cape of Good Hope that these mainly came, though some came from the nascent French settlement in Madagascar. When war with France broke out in 1778, great efforts were made by the East India Company to convince the Governor of the Cape—a neutral and well disposed to us—that the export of his grain would seriously embarrass his colony; and to persuade him to place an embargo upon it, the result of which would have been to prevent the French from receiving the supplies without which the squadron and army could not be maintained. This, though it had some results, was unsuccessful, for where there is a good market, trade will take advantage of it. No sooner, however, did Holland throw in her lot with France in 1780, than an expedition was dispatched to the Cape with the definite

intention of capturing this supply base of the French. The object was the defence of India. This expedition was baulked of its attempt by that great French commander, Suffren, who, falling in with it by accident on its voyage, inflicted such injury that its progress was stopped, and the French were first at the Cape and reinforced it. Mauritius, therefore, remained at the service of a French squadron which, in the hands of Suffren, came perilously near to bringing about a downfall of British power in Southern India. The future Indian Empire was twice on the verge of being wrecked by sea-power.

When a new war with France broke out in 1793, and, after a revolution in Holland, the Dutch republicans joined the Jacobins, the Cape at once loomed into prominence. An expedition was sent in 1795, not because we wanted to seize a colony and expand our Empire, but to prevent its use by the French. The dependence of the naval base at Mauritius again was insisted upon. 'It [Mauritius] serves,' said Dundas, 'as a granary to the Isles of France.' It was also a base from which French cruisers would attack our outward trade. Further, it was to St. Helena, the port of refreshment of British homeward-bound Indiamen, what it was to Mauritius—a source of supply, without which St. Helena could not furnish the needs of the ships. In French hands this supply would be cut off. For these reasons, when negotiations for peace were under consideration in 1796, the retention of the Cape was insisted upon. 'It was as a means of defence, not of offence that these possessions [the Cape and Trincomali] would be insisted on.'[1] What was 'a feather in the hands of

[1] Lord Malmesbury, N.R.S., lxii. 233.

Holland but a sword in the hands of France' could not be returned in the light of the subordination of Holland to an appendage of France. We could not cede what was described as 'the bulwark of the wealth of the country and the security of the British Empire.' But, as in earlier times, there was not only no idea of the Cape as a colony, but a definite prejudice against it. 'As a colony,' said Dundas, 'it would be rather dangerous . . . we have already too many drains on our population.'

Nevertheless, three years later, at the Peace of Amiens, the Cape was returned to the Dutch. The country and Europe were in an exhausted state and needed peace, and the cession was agreed to. A bad peace was followed by a resumption of war with France for reasons with which you are familiar. Once more the Cape became a prize, and for the same reasons as before. A British expedition was sent in 1806, the Cape was again taken, and this time it remained permanently in our hands. But though its capture crippled Mauritius as a base for trade attack, it did not ruin it. A small force of some 6 to 10 frigates and privateers, operating from Mauritius, took a heavy toll of British shipping in the Indian Seas, and—here is one of the many illustrations of our needs of cruising ships—occupied the attention of no fewer than 31 sail of naval vessels from ships of the line to frigates as well as the whole Bombay Marine of cruisers, about 20 in number. In spite of the great preponderance, security could not be given until Mauritius itself was taken in 1810; and thus it was that for reasons of security to our trade, not from desire for territory, another addition was made to the Empire.

I have digressed beyond the period of 1775 in order

to complete the outline of this incident of Empire, which began in the War of the American Revolution. Returning to that war itself, how far did sea-power in that struggle affect the destinies of Empire? British sea-power was vastly preponderant between 1775 and 1778, when, following Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga, France joined the American rebels, to be followed, in successive years, by Spain and Holland. If sea-power is so great an instrument, why did it not prevent that loss? The answer is that the issue of those three years' fighting was sought on land; and there we either—you may choose your opinions—sent too few troops or troops not sufficiently trained for the fighting, or commanders of insufficient capacity. But we cannot claim that the loss was due to insufficient strength at sea, for the British navy was incomparably stronger than the small forces at the disposal of the Northern Colonists; and it is permissible to doubt whether after those first three years of war it would ever have been possible, even with military conquest, to regain the loyalty and allegiance of the Colonists. After the entry of the European sea Powers against us, the only hope, if hope there were, lay in preventing them from giving their military aid. And that was not done. The fleet had been neglected in the peace, and we have seen that its fitting out was hampered for want of stores, when the three years' supply which had been in the yards in 1775 was exhausted in 1778, and the forests of Maine could not furnish the needs of big timber. Still, if sea-power had been used as it might have been, little or no French assistance would have reached America, and it is not impossible that military reconquest might have been effected, even if political conquest were not; and by itself military

conquest would have been of small value, for the breach had by then widened beyond repair.

In that period after the entrance of France and Spain one sees battles fought in the West Indies—the familiar name of Rodney comes into the story, fighting his battles about the West Indian Islands. Why was this? The reason again lay in colonial policy. When the entrance of the European Powers made success against the rebels improbable, the King turned our arms against the European enemies. Their only vulnerable point was in their West India trade; and we had a second vulnerable point in our own. The scene of the British struggle shifted from America—not that it ceased there—to the West Indies, where the enemy and ourselves aimed blows at each other's possessions. Islands were lost and won; in the end little change in possession took place. But the reason for that sea struggle in the West Indies was the great value which each European Power attached to the trade of the Islands. Trade, as before, was the fundamental object.

At the same time came that opportunity to regain her place in India for which, eleven years earlier, De Bussy had said France could wait. Thither she sent her best sea officer, Suffren, who for a year and a half in 1782 and 1783, with a squadron initially superior but eventually inferior to the British, fought the British under Admiral Hughes. Five hard battles were fought off the Coromandel and Ceylon coasts; and the British Empire in India was never in a more trembling situation than when the command of the sea in India passed temporarily into French hands. I think nothing is more remarkable in the long struggle with France for India than the regularity with which the pendulum of success swung to the French

or English armies on land according to the state of the command at sea. It would be tedious to recount the story; a few incidents alone will suffice to illustrate it. We lose command in 1746, and Madras is taken by the French. They attack Cuddalore; our command at sea is regained and the attack fails. French squadrons, detained at Mauritius for want of supplies, prevent the French from assisting our enemies on land. Command at sea permits us to send Clive to Bengal and win Plassey and conquer the Northern Circars. A hole in the command enables Lally to be reinforced by sea and take Fort St. David; but an attempt on Madras is prevented by the arrival of a British squadron. The French squadron is fought and beaten; Masulipatam is taken; the victory of Wandewash and the fall of Pondicherry follow. Command at sea enables our armies under Coote to be supplied; loss of command nearly starves that army, and would have done so if the French commander had been resolute. Command at sea before Suffren's arrival enables us to take Negapatam and Trincomali. Loss of command afterwards loses us Cuddalore and Trincomali. Restored strength enables the British to endeavour to recover Cuddalore; lost command makes the recovery impossible, and but for a fortuitous peace might have lost us an army and the South of India. These illustrations could be multiplied; they are only typical of what sea-power means to the Empire in a single theatre of war; but they are illustrative of the importance of it in the widest extensions of strategy.

Though sea-power failed to retain for us our Empire in North America, it saved the country from any other losses of importance. It enabled India to be held. It prevented the loss of Gibraltar. The country was not

invaded. In fact, schemes for the hoped-for destruction of England recoiled on the heads of their designers; for one result of the struggle thus wantonly and revengefully undertaken by the France of Louis XVI was that loss of trade and general distress which, following those of the Seven Years War, contributed so materially to the downfall of his dynasty and system of government at the French Revolution.

If you look at the dates in any handbook of the acquisition of many of our colonies, you do not see a great number dating from that war, for, though many were taken, many were restored at the peace to get terms for our allies or a stable situation in Europe. Those we retained had mainly a strategic interest, and were retained for that reason. It was strategy which dictated the capture of the Cape of Good Hope and its retention. Ceylon we owe to the same reason, Trincomali being the only harbour in the Bay of Bengal, until we reach the Hoogli, in which a fleet can lie at all seasons of the year. Mauritius was taken and kept because in every war it had been a nest of privateers or a naval base endangering the security of our trade or our rule in India. Pondicherry, Chandernagore, and Mahé, being unimportant and harmless, were returned; Minorca, retaken from Spain by us in 1801, was also returned; for then we had Malta, and another base was not an absolute necessity. Malta we took and kept for obvious reasons. Trinidad lay at a point of naval importance, and we retained it. Java, valuable as it is, we returned for a reason not unlike that for which we returned Cape Breton—namely, to obtain security for the Dutch against France. It is hardly too much to say that that string of minor colonies and the Cape of Good Hope are portions

of the Empire for no other reason than their relation to sea-power. The trade with most of them was negligible. The Cape barely supported its own people. Mauritius was not rich. Ceylon had a trade in spices—principally cinnamon—but it was not for that, nor in prophetic anticipation of a great trade in coffee, in quinine, in tea or in rubber, that it is ours ; but because it is a base required for the defence of our great interest, sea-borne trade.

What were the reactions of sea-power upon the Empire in that tremendous struggle with France? First, you see the efforts of the British navy and army being largely devoted to the West Indies—I have already spoken of the Cape. We see campaigns prosecuted in those unhealthy islands which cost us 100,000 lives. The policy was contemptuously described by an opponent as ' filching sugar islands,' but that description does injustice to a policy which, bad as it proved, had at least a reasoned foundation, incorrect though the premises of the reasoning may have been. The great interest of this country in war was said, and correctly said, to be to strengthen ourselves and weaken our enemy at sea. It was less correctly said that we should do this best by taking from them those islands, the wealth of which furnished the sinews of war—and France, her finance in a state of chaos, needed all the financial strength she could obtain—taking from her the colonial resources which were indispensable for the maintenance of a fleet, destroying the shipping trade which furnished her with seamen, and capturing those bases from which her cruising vessels inflicted grave injury on our own most valuable and important Western trade. Also, what we took from her accrued to

ourselves. The first thing that war involves is a loss of markets. For those markets which we lost owing to other countries coming under French rule, we substituted others we took from the same rule. Such was the argument. It will be observed that the reasoning does not rest upon a need or a desire for obtaining colonies, but upon definite strategical foundations: an offensive to weaken the enemy, a defensive of our own essential interest—trade and shipping. To those two elements the question of Empire, and the importance to it of sea-power, always returns. So, in those first years, a host of islands fall into our hands—French and Dutch; and the Secretary of State for War, in justifying his policy—a policy by no means generally approved—does so on the grounds aforementioned. 'The three objects,' he said, 'which any statesman at the commencement of a war would wish us to attain, viz: Martinique, Cape Nicola Mole (that is, an important French harbour in Hayti) and the Cape of Good Hope, were every one in our possession'; and he compares this national strategy with that of any army which strikes at its enemy's line of communication and so disables it: so he thought to disable France and protect ourselves. What is the meaning of these three places? One is a port in the Leeward Islands, one in the Windward Islands, and one on the route to India.

Though the outer ports were thus held, there never was nor could be total security so long as the enemy possessed sea-power in some form and degree. France still possessed the most essential element in sea-power—ships and seamen—though she had lost much of the other element, the foreign possessions from which it could operate. But she had forced the British navy out of the

Mediterranean by her conquests in Italy. As she lacked bases abroad, we lacked them in the Mediterranean, where we held Gibraltar alone. In 1798 it is learned that an armament, a fleet with troops on board it, is preparing at Toulon. Where it is going is unknown. The scattered Empire presents targets everywhere. It may be Ireland, which is in trouble: it may be the West Indies, to recover her lost islands; or the Cape; or India. It may be Naples and Sicily; or Egypt. A wealth of choice is offered. Where so many destinations are possible there is one place only in which they can be defended—at the point of departure of the expedition. It is sometimes difficult for those who live at the ends of the world to understand that they can be safe though there may be the slenderest or even no naval forces on their coasts, and to remain patient when they are told that so long as the fleet in Home Waters is strong and properly used their Dominions are safe. It may appear to them that the real reason for the fleet being kept at home is to ensure the security of the Home Country, to the neglect of its Imperial children. But it is not so. The reason is that when the destination of an enemy is unknown, and he has choice of several, the only place in which superior force can be massed, and his interception assured, is off his point of departure. A writer, probably Anson, expressed this fundamental principle of the use of sea-power in Imperial defence in 1756 in these terms: 'Our Colonies are so numerous and so extensive that to keep a naval force at each equal to the united force of France would be impracticable with double our Navy. The best defence therefore for our Colonies as well as our Coasts is to have such a squadron always to the Westward as may in all

probability either keep the French in port or give them battle with advantage if they come out.' There is the foundation of the problem of the use of sea-power in Imperial defence.

It was in accordance with that rule that Nelson was sent to Toulon. You know the story of the Nile, of his perplexities as to whither the enemy, when he missed them owing to bad weather, were gone. How, convinced they had gone to Egypt, with India as their destination, he went first to Alexandria, turned back and inquired at Palermo, returned to Egypt and there found the French fleet; and on August 1 destroyed in its cradle Bonaparte's Eastern Empire. Egypt, long ago recommended by Kaunitz to Louis XIV as the point to which French efforts should be directed, the umbilicus of the world, now assumes an important Imperial connotation: and with it Malta. Malta had been taken from the successors of the Knights of St. John by Bonaparte on his Eastern voyage. For the safety of India Britain cannot afford to allow France to remain in either Malta or Egypt. After a long siege Malta was taken, mainly as the result of a maritime blockade, and in 1801, after nearly three years of French occupation, the isolated French army in Egypt was decisively defeated by Abercrombie, and sent back to France. That is an incident in the use of sea-power, which confers upon its possessor the power to move military force—provided it possesses it—in strength superior to that of an enemy in an outlying territory. When peace came Malta was included in the restitutions to be made. But as its value as an element in sea-power was clear, it was not willingly that this was agreed to: and when Bonaparte's attitude towards Holland and

Switzerland was made clear, we, with a full appreciation of what it meant, refused to leave Malta. So the war began again: it began because we could not commit the strategical suicide which restoring Malta under those conditions plainly spelled; and another addition to the Empire acquired by, and required for, sea-power was made.[1]

The two years' struggle between Britain and Napoleon with the resources of France, Spain and Holland at his disposal was one of sea-power. It did not witness a marked extension of Empire: it registered no loss. A new coalition came into being and ended its short life at Ulm on October 28, 1805, a week after the final and complete assertion of the superiority of British sea-power at Trafalgar. But the war was not ended. There were as many years of war ahead as there were behind: and in those years Napoleon aimed his blows at those very objects which, as we have seen, had always been recognised as the highest British interests—trade and shipping. Precisely as the dominating element in colonial policy had been to open up and have the use of markets, so the dominating element in British policy as a whole during these nine years was the opening up of new markets to replace those of which Napoleon's continental system had deprived us. Sea-power was the instrument for forcing trade to take channels favourable to ourselves, and islands, previously restored at the Peace of Amiens, were reconquered. St. Lucia, Tobago, Demerara and Surinam were taken while we were singly engaged with France without allies. It was indeed the only form of offensive act,

[1] I commend for study the admirable article on the British title to Malta by Dr. Holland Rose in his *Indecisiveness of Modern War*.

beyond the blockade, that lay in our power. It does not represent a colonial policy, but a purely strategical one, aimed partly at defending our commerce from privateers, partly at cutting off French economic resources. This phase of the war may be said to have ended after Trafalgar. Between the date of that battle and that of Napoleon's first abdication British sea-power was active. We have seen that the Cape was reoccupied; besides that a host of lesser places were taken, including every French island in the West Indies—Marie Galante, Desirade, Martinique, Cayenne, Guadeloupe, Saba, St. Eustatius, St. Martin's; and in the East Indies, where the Dutch had great possessions, Amboyna and Banda Neira, Java, as well as the French islands of Mauritius and Bourbon. Some were returned at the peace, and, though the statement is not one of absolute application, it may be said that the principle governing the disposal of these conquests at the peace was that those of strategic importance were retained and the others used as counters with which to bargain. Desiring a strong and friendly Holland, because security in the Low Countries was a cardinal factor in British security, the Dutch colonies were returned to her, except those two of outstanding strategical importance, Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope. It must not, however, be supposed that these operations against the enemies' colonial possessions represented the total effort or even a great proportion of the effort of the sea-power of the country; it was an offshoot, mainly defensive, from the greater operations in Europe, which consisted in maintaining the superiority at sea we had acquired, preventing, as we did in 1807, the building up of new coalitions from the maritime states under Napoleon's rule, securing territories

like Sicily essential to the safety of maritime traffic, supporting that great diversion in Spain which bled Napoleon so grievously, and conducting those operations of blockade with which Napoleon's continental system was answered, the eventual result of which was the return of the remnants of the Grande Armée from Moscow.

To make a general summary in conclusion. Sea-power and the Empire have been inextricably interwoven. We see in the beginnings a yearning for Empire for the objects of greatness and glory natural in an age of Romance; but not without an economic reason; and it is the offspring of sea-power. But with the passing from the romantic to the commercial age, Empire makes no appeal in itself. It is its utility that makes the appeal. Empire furnishes trade and the means of security. 'The true interest of England is its trade; if this receives a baffle, England is neither able to support itself nor the Plantations that depend upon it, and then consequently they must crumble into so many distinct independent Governments, and thereby becoming weak will be a prey to any stronger Power which shall attack them.'[1] Colonies are a strength in so far as they stimulate trade, for that not only strengthens the nation but leads to an increase in the strength in its defence—the sea-power. When the colonies or dependencies are attacked it is by means of sea-power they are defended. The burden of defence lies upon the Mother Country until a day comes when that burden becomes so heavy that England asks the Empire to share it: and the refusal, followed by attempts to enforce the demand, lead to the loss of the First British Empire.

[1] Quoted in Beer, *op. cit.* ii. 111.

Behind sea-power another Empire grows into existence. A long war begins in 1793 in which England's sea-power is the rock of defence of the liberties of the world; her wealth, derived from trade, is the means by which her allies are kept—with intervals of abstention and defeat—in the field. To preserve that trade she must cripple the sea-power of her enemies: and she cripples it by taking the possessions from which their sea forces can operate against it. The Cape and Ceylon first, and many minor possessions later, are in consequence added to the Empire: not because we desired colonies, but because we must have security. The wealth derived largely from the colonial trade, the shipping which had been the result of an extended commerce and oversea possessions, enabled Britain, though not without the greatest difficulty, to survive through a struggle in which her great enemy had the trade of Europe in his hands.

The peace in 1815 thus found Britain with a great Colonial Empire. She had occupied many settlements and some large territories oversea, and had begun to make a form of settlement in a new continent, uninhabited by any European race. Her sea-power made it possible for her to insist that this new continent should not be shared with another Power, and thus to prevent the sowing of trouble such as had been reaped in North America.

It is not necessary to follow the development of Empire in the eighteenth century, for although the great additions made after the Napoleonic wars could not have been made without sea-power, there is no such a relation between Empire and sea-power in policy as in the earlier times. Indeed, Empire came to be looked

upon rather as a *damnosa haereditas* than a boon. Colonies were no longer closed markets, and conferred, so it was held, no benefits or advantages. The Secretary for the Colonies in the middle of the nineteenth century remarked indeed that 'with the Colonial trade thrown open and colonisation at an end, it is obvious that the leading motives which induced our ancestors to found and maintain a Colonial Empire no longer exist.' Yet is this true? Does it not omit to take into consideration one influence at least—that of increasing our sea-power? The conditions had demonstrably changed, but some of the factors which had passed away had only been replaced by others. Sea-power was still as essential to our security as it had been in the earlier centuries. Shipping and seamen still constituted an element in sea-power, as the late war has abundantly shown us; and among the elements of sea-power is the possession, or the use, of sea-ports, bases of refreshment and supply all over the world, as Mahan long ago pointed out and experience of actual commerce protection has proved—if proof were, indeed, necessary. Loss of sea-power by the Empire, as an old writer, quoted earlier, said, would lead to the break-up or loss of the Empire. Loss or break-up of Empire, on the other hand, must similarly mean a definite loss of sea-power, since, among other obvious things, it would spell the loss of those positions indispensable for the security of that trade without which the country cannot support its population. And, in its turn again, loss of sea-power means that the country must succumb to whoever shall have gained it, if he should turn his strength against us.

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